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LETTERS

FROM

BARBARY, FRANCE, SPAIN, PORTUGAL, &c.

BY AN ENGLISH OFFICER.

Il s'agit de faire penſer, et non de faire lire.

MONTESQUIEU.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

MDCCXC.


G.R. III.

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LET-

LETTERS
FROM
SPAIN,
TO
FRIENDS IN ENGLAND.

LETTER I.

On entering Spain from France.—The Country.—The Mountains.—National and Provincial Objects.—French Government.

Bilbao.

I HAVE entered Spain, this time, with ſome prepoſſeſſions in its favour, though already tolerably acquainted with it: having, on former occaſions, examined the ſouthern parts with ſome pleaſure, I am now traverſing the northern provinces of

the *peninſula*, as the Spaniards are fond of calling it.

A ſmall party of young people, finding or fancying themſelves tired of French faces and French nonſenſe, readily agree to take the opportunity of my little buſineſs in this country, and to go in ſearch of ſomething ſuperior, and perhaps not without hopes of ſome curious adventures in theſe regions of romance: for, I think, the very mention of Spain awakens in the mind, eſpecially of young people, ideas of ſomething romantic and uncommon.

Our ſchemes, principles, or prejudices, once adopted, you know the fancy has a wonderful knack at confirming us in them by many artful ways, and of ſeducing us by her manner of colouring and ſhewing us the objects of inclination, and by concealing or diſtorting the reſt. Overlooking, therefore, the many excellent and amiable qualities of the French in our frequent conſultations, and imagining ourſelves diſguſted with their follies and affectation, we left their country, almoſt confirmed in the expectation of finding all the

oppoſite

oppoſite qualities in Spain;—more of pure nature, ſincerity, and ſound ſenſe,—their mirth and their muſic, and every thing more to our taſte. Now, though our hopes, as uſual, have already proved partly deluſive, it muſt be confeſſed, that ſpecific differences do exiſt between the characters of theſe two nations, and that ſeveral circumſtances in the approaches to Spain, on this ſide, are calculated to produce a favourable diſpoſition in the traveller.

Many objects in this country concur to fill the mind with noble and pleaſing ſentiments. Our firſt ſight of the Pyrenean mountains, from a vaſt diſtance, viewing their ſnowy tops above the clouds from the *landes*, an arid and deſert plain; then the gradual riſe of that tireſome plain, as we advance, into beautiful green hills, lakes, woods, and at length to naked or ſnowy rocks that ſeem to pierce the heavens; all contribute to inſpire new and ſublime ideas; and the mind thus warmed and elevated, is diſpoſed to ſpread the beauties that pleaſe us, over all the objects around.

Moſt of theſe countries formed by the ſkirts of the Pyrenees, are beautiful, and very different from the reſt of France, and, in my opinion, much ſuperior to moſt of it. The human ſpecies, as you advance, ſeems likewiſe to change and improve into a more vigorous and hardy race; they are fond of their liberties, for which they have often encountered that deſpotiſm by which they are ſurrounded. It has been obſerved, that the Bayonne privateers have generally fought well: laſt war they gained great credit.

Among theſe mountains lies Bearn, the country of Henry IV. Here he was born, and paſſed his infancy. Full of the idea of this excellent king, I wiſhed to trace him from his cradle, and as it were, ſee where he went, and what he did; but could not prevail with the reſt of the party. The imagination, led away with that heroic character, with theſe romantic and ſublime ſcenes of nature, and with all my old prejudices in favour of mountaineers, I began to doubt and diſpute—if a level country be fit to produce great men.

Here

Here we meet with good country-houſes in noble ſituations; alſo plenty, hoſpitality, and old hearty country manners. But moſt of the eſtates, even the ſmalleſt, are entailed, and hence little land ever comes to market. Such a ſtop to the circulation of property is a great hindrance to the improvement of a country.

The ports of Bayonne and St. Jean de Luz ſhow now a conſiderable ſpirit of commerce and improvement; but the effects of that ſpirit do not extend far into the country. Theſe ports have been improved, extenſive piers conſtructed and kept up at a great expence; but the oppreſſions of a government remote and jealous, by gradually impairing their privileges, will probably, in time, reduce theſe people to a common level with the reſt of their ſubjects, to poverty and dependence; —a prey to intendants, fermiers, gabelles, &c. The inſolence of people in office will then more than counterbalance the operations of induſtry. Their ports will fall to ruin and fill up, by any remiſſion of thoſe conſtant and expenſive efforts that are ne-

ceſſary againſt their other powerful enemies, the ſea and ſand, that are perpetually rolling in upon them from the Bay of Biſcay.

This leads to reflections on ſubjects which I would rather wiſh to recommend to your future conſideration, than attempt to decide upon now; *viz.* Of the various objects of public concern, to diſtinguiſh that which ought to be left to provincial or local management, from what ſhould be under that of the general or national government. The national government generally errs, I think, on the wrong ſide, and, aſſuming the management of every thing, leaves too little for the people themſelves to do: overlooking the ſmall, but more effectual encouragement and aſſiſtance which would often incite the people to help themſelves, and produce more public good.

If the French government were to try ſome experiments of this kind, in different provinces, as has often been propoſed, and give up to them the management of ſeveral branches of taxation, of revenue, and public works, they might be enabled to decide upon

upon ſome general ſyſtem for the whole nation. But there is not much probability of that government going ſo far. Were they even to begin and ſet heartily about it, they would probably tire in the courſe of it, and fail in attempting to ſurmount ſome of the various ſucceſſions of difficulties that would ariſe. From ſome few inſtances of ignorance or diſhoneſty, they would haſtily pronounce the provinces unfit to be truſted with their own affairs.

We now go on with our journey, and enter Spain through great variety and ſucceſſions of grand mountains, where I wiſhed to have ſtaid much longer to indulge in contemplating thoſe majeſtic ſcenes of nature: but I will not, therefore, detain you there, with poetic, glowing, or raving deſcriptions, which are generally better calculated to amuſe the writer than the reader, and prove moſtly inadequate to the purpoſes of tranſmitting the ideas or the ſentiments intended.

LETTER II.

Guipuſcoa.—Lime.—Police.—People.—Women.—Frontier.—Induſtry.—Liberty.—Policy.—Paſage.—St. Sebaſtian's.

ON entering Spain by Guipuſcoa, pleaſed and elevated by that noble and majeſtic kind of country,—from the heavy ſands and bad roads of Guienne, to the new and excellent ones of theſe provinces,—from the heathy or naked *landes*, to theſe magnificent mountains, which are moſtly cultivated, or covered with woods, we continued ſtill, for a time, prepoſſeſſed in favour of the country in general, and rather blind to the ſurrounding poverty and dirt, which, however, ſoon began to appear in various ſhapes.

In theſe northern, and in other parts of Spain, the want of lime-ſtone is a more capital defect than you may at firſt imagine. The little lime they can afford to procure,

muſt be brought by ſea. The want of neatneſs, and of finiſhing, in their ordinary buildings,—the dead and melancholy appearance of the country, though tolerably filled with villages, are among the conſequences of this want.

Their towns and villages are, even here, likewiſe deficient in other little objects of police and cleanlineſs, in contrivance and manner of building, on which, with us, depend many of the comforts of life; and ſtill more in the internal parts of Spain. So that, as we advance into the country, the mortifying and loathſome proſpects of human miſery and indolence increaſe upon us, and are too often ſufficient to damp the ſpirits of the moſt cheerful and invincible traveller: and more eſpecially, if he is ſatisfied with a firſt view, and does not ſtop long enough any where to learn the language, and to diſcover ſome of thoſe valuable and agreeable qualities to be found in the character and *trato*, i. e. the diſpoſition and behaviour of many excellent individuals of both ſexes; and in the manners and humours of the people, all of which

which ſo generally and warmly attach thoſe who ſtay any time among them.

After ſome converſation and debate, I think our party all agree, that the Spaniſh character is readily diſtinguiſhable from the French, and in ſome things rather advantageouſly, amidſt all their ſcarcity, their poverty, and negligence of appearance. In the female ſex, the difference is ſtriking. In many, the figure and manner, the eyes and caſt of features, the ſhape and air, the kind of animation and ſenſibility, more temperate and graceful, yet far more ſignificant and powerful. In ſhort, the ſex ſeem here a different, and moſt of us think, a ſuperior race of beings, even to thoſe we left on the other ſide of the Pyrenees, whom nevertheleſs, you know, I highly eſteem.

Spain has here a good defenſible frontier. Fontarabia, now neglected, has formerly reſiſted the whole power of France. But this is the beſt part of their frontier. They could not now keep the French out of their country in caſe of war. The other paſſes of the Pyrenees are in the

poſſeſſion of France, as at Belgarde, &c. This is a material circumſtance in their alliance, and ſecures its duration.

The French, by the way, they ſay, begin to work a good copper-mine in theſe mountains, towards Navarre, within the Spaniſh frontier; and if they can once erect mills, and manufacture that metal as we do, they may, in time, copper their ſhips as readily, with ſeveral other advantages.

The inhabitants of theſe three or four northern provinces of Spain are, I think, a more ſtout, hardy, and healthy race, than the reſt. They eat more animal food than moſt others, except the Engliſh, and, like them, are of a noble, frank, and generous temper. They are diſtinguiſhable enough from thoſe of the other provinces, in character, perſon, and countenance, by one who lives in Spain, though not ſo readily by foreigners, who conſider all as Spaniards who inhabit the kingdom: but a Biſcayan, or a Catalan, is offended by that appellation.

There are ſeveral viſibly diſtinct races of people in Spain. Theſe are among the moſt laborious.

laborious. They cultivate their mountains (and their country conſiſts of little elſe) to the very tops, chiefly with inſtruments worked by hand, as large hoes, forks, &c. and in which both ſexes labour equally and together. This is the only country in Spain where planting is attended to. There are laws that oblige them to plant when they cut their trees: timber being neceſſary to their iron-works and ſhip-building, and it adds great beauty to the country. Theſe branches of induſtry might be carried much farther, if the Spaniſh government could be wiſe enough to let them alone, and only buy their iron, their guns, and ſhips, and contrive for them ſome gradually increaſing demand or market, ſo as to increaſe and employ ſo uſeful a people. But government is ſupplied from abroad with ſeveral things which, it is ſaid, might be made or produced here.

Theſe three *Baſcongada* provinces, Guipuſcoa, Alava, and Biſcaya, together with Navarre, are now the only remaining aſylums in the peninſula for liberty: and its effects ſtill evidently appear in their character,

racter, induſtry, and population, to the obvious advantage of both the governing and governed. But ſome of the over-wiſe Spaniſh lawyers are already beginning to embroil this buſineſs, and to perſuade government that theſe people are too free,—that they are bad and diſloyal ſubjects: and this over-wiſe government ſeems inclined to believe ſuch doctrine, and to ſhew a mean and unjuſt jealouſy of their proſperity.

Spain has certainly hitherto found her account in leaving theſe provinces thus looſely attached to her, on their own terms, appointing only one or two of their chief magiſtrates, and a commiſſary to take care of the revenue; permitting them to make their own laws, raiſe their taxes, and to govern their own affairs nearly as they pleaſe. Every advantage and ſucceſs that could well be expected, have attended theſe meaſures, and would go on to attend them probably ſtill more in future, if there could be wiſdom and liberality enough in the Spaniſh government only to aſſiſt them in promoting their own patriotic meaſures, and help the leading men among them to

improve

improve the country. And ſuch are the beſt, and perhaps the only maxims by which any nation or community ſhould ever permit itſelf to govern another. We ſhould, in ſuch caſes, do all the good we can, without ſtopping to calculate the benefits that may reſult to ourſelves. Various advantages to the ſuperior power, will generally be the fruits of ſuch meaſures; and the produce more certain and direct, than by all the political and uſurious bargains, laws, or treaties, that could previouſly be made to ſecure their obedience or their cuſtom. But ſuch meaſures I doubt whether their government is capable of purſuing for a ſufficient length of time: and it is not ſo much from any plan or deſign, as from indolence, inability, accident, and other circumſtances of the Spaniſh government, that theſe mountaineers have hitherto eſcaped the ſame yoke as their neighbouring provinces.

The ſituation and ſucceſs of theſe are certainly worth the conſideration of a traveller, and may furniſh uſeful political leſſons for other nations and their dependents;

and

and likewiſe for Spain herſelf: for with her diſtant colonies ſhe has followed contrary maxims, and has generally ſucceeded badly. If you had followed ſuch maxims with your colonies, if you had ſlackened inſtead of tightening the reins of government, and permitted the ſovereignty gradually to relax and diminiſh, both you and they might probably have gone on to proſper for ever together: that connection, if left alone to its natural progreſſion, would have gradually changed into ſome intercourſe more beneficial to both, but would never, probably, have arrived at a total ſeparation, and might always have promoted your mutual political advantages: and let us ſtill hope, in caſe of a political ſeparation, that you may both ſoon recover your tempers, ſo as to reſtore an intimate commercial connexion.

Theſe northern provinces having proved more intereſting than was expected, we have been agreeably diſappointed, in ſpite of the defects already mentioned, and I wiſhed to dwell in the country, and on the ſubject, more than time will permit to either; ſo that you may eſcape with only a

few

few more miſcellaneous obſervations, as uſual.

Paſage—is a very good little ſea-port, well formed, and ſhut up, by nature; now in poſſeſſion of the Carraca company, who have almoſt a monopoly of the cocoa trade, which muſt be very conſiderable: there is a vaſt deal of chocolate drank in Europe. I have heard that the country about Carraca is among the richeſt and beſt ſettled of any in Spaniſh America.

Here is an iron mill, erected by D'Aragori. It produces about three hundred bars *per* week. His ſon, the Marquis d'Iranda, is now travelling in queſt of uſeful knowledge,—that of trades and manufactures.

St. Sebaſtian's—a curious promontory; a rock projecting into the ſea. Its ſummit is fortified, and might be made very ſtrong. It forms a good port and ſhelter againſt ſome winds, though open to the north. By the help of a mole or pier, it might be made a tolerable harbour, ſheltered from north-weſt round to north-eaſt. But the town, like many others, built in times of ignorance

ignorance and civil wars, ſtands in the wrong place. Thoſe built for defence are generally found to be ill adapted for commerce or conveniency; and men remain, by habit, fixed to places and cuſtoms, long after the cauſes that eſtabliſhed them have ceaſed. This is very generally the caſe in Spain.

LETTER III.

Romantic Ruins and Situations.—Strangers attached to Spain.—Society of Arts.—Good Conde.—Induſtry.

THEIR towns and villages, in theſe northern provinces, have generally ſomething about them that is very romantic and intereſting in ſituation and manner of building. Some retain a certain air of antique magnificence; but as they are too generally approaching to a ſtate of ruin and decline, they ſtrike with a melancholy idea of ſome former better times, and the mind deplores the viciſſitudes of human greatneſs, and its productions. Ruins do, indeed, form the ſtriking features of this whole peninſula: ſo many old caſtles, declining towns and manſions, the ſad remains of former grandeur, ſo frequently to be met with; together with the peculiar romantic

romantic humour and manners of the natives, all contribute to keep up the idea of this being the country of romance. I longed to reſtore ſome of their magnificent old manſions to their original ſtate. I believe one of the few pleaſures of travelling through Spain, may conſiſt in indulging the fancy in this ſpecies of caſtle-building, in improving and beautifying the face of the country.

The bold and romantic ſituation of ſeveral of their little towns, in theſe two provinces, as Vergara, &c. pendent on the ſides of rocky mountains, over a rapid ſtream, among other bold and pleaſing ſentiments, ſuggeſts to the fancy, that of a hardy and vigorous race of people, which is preſently confirmed by ſeeing the children careleſsly climbing the ſteep hills and precipices, and early employed in manly occupations.

But ſo much old, and ſo little new, even in the beſt provinces of Spain, is certainly a ſtrong ſymptom of decline, with whatever confidence a few people about the court may flatter themſelves, and their

good monarch, into notions of their preſent riſing ſtate of proſperity and advancement.

It is hard to account for that ſingular attachment which many of us foreigners, who come from better countries, contract for this of Spain, and which, having once lived here, makes us long to return to it as to a native land, and give a preference to the poverty and deſolation of this over the wealth and acquirements of more poliſhed nations: perhaps it could not be well accounted for, without leading you through the country, and ſhewing you what it is we like. The warm predilection obſervable in many of the Engliſh in particular for this country, may proceed from ſome ſecret ſympathy, and ſimilarity of character and taſte; the ſame natural and original diſlike of the French,—a ſimilar turn of mind in many things, are obvious enough, and may help to form this kind of mental union: it is likewiſe to the powerful attractions of the ſex in Spain, that we may aſcribe much of this attachment,—to their peculiar graces, ſpirit, and converſa-

tion: the footing of equality on which they live and work with the men in this country, is alſo remarkable.

I was highly pleaſed, you may be ſure, to find in theſe mountains, a ſociety and academy for the encouragement of uſeful arts and knowledge, lately founded on good and benevolent principles. They have their yearly meetings alternately at the capital of each of theſe three provinces, *viz.* at Vitoria, Vergara, and Bilbao. But embarraſſed by the jealous and miſchievous ſpirit of their government and religion, they are forced to proceed with too much caution in their choice of profeſſors, books, ſubjects; otherwiſe, ſome inquiſitor, informer, or friar, or perhaps ſome French influence at court, may deſtroy all the intended fabric in its foundation.

Their ſucceſs likewiſe depends too much on the life of one man, the Conde de Pena Florida, the principal author and promoter of all theſe improvements. He is one of thoſe old-faſhioned country gentlemen who prefer a country life to a town reſidence;

he chuſes to live at home, upon his eſtate, and do all the good he can. Once a year, I underſtand, he goes to court. He has had influence with moſt of the gentlemen of this country, to follow his example. By ſuch active benevolence, and by intermarriages, he ſeems the father of a whole country. Surely, in life there cannot be a happier condition. His liberality ſeldom appears in acts of mere charity, which generally ſerves only to promote indolence and vice. It is by encouraging uſeful trades and manufactures, that he diffuſes through the whole country a ſpirit of active induſtry and emulation.

He is obliged to have prieſts in his academy, and he ſeems to have got one at the head of it, of as liberal a turn of mind as could be wiſhed. He was very happy to talk freely to us; a pleaſure which can ſeldom be indulged in theſe countries, and which we know not how to appretiate, by its being already ſo common among us.

The Conde ſends his ſons to travel for real information, and chiefly in the uſeful

arts,

arts. I found one of them at Paris, and hope I have prevailed on him to viſit England, with ſeveral others of his countrymen, who are ſtudying there, with great application and ſucceſs,—chiefly in chemiſtry, natural or experimental philoſophy, with the practice of ſome of the moſt uſeful trades. Another of the Conde's ſons was ſent to Sweden, to learn every thing concerning iron and ſteel. But he unfortunately died, or the good Conde might, by this time, have ſucceeded in ſome more of his patriotic ſchemes, particularly the making of ſteel, to which this country is well adapted, as it produces all ſorts of iron and charcoal.

He continues, however, indefatigable; and it is probable that ſome of his favourite projects may yet ſucceed, or, at leaſt, be begun, if he lives long enough. But as ſuch men are very ſcarce in this country, it is not ſo probable that his improvements may be taken up, and carried on, after his death:—ſuch as making more roads, and rendering rivers navigable, forming and improving more harbours on their coaſt.

They already make ſmall arms at Palencia, and have lately exported conſiderable quantities to our old friends, and new enemies, in America: and have now large orders from their own government. This, with ſeveral other ſymptoms, ſhews clearly enough, what conduct we have yet long to expect from this nation, or rather its government.

LETTER IV.

Iron.—Trades.—Muſic.—Timber.—Bilbao.—Wool.—Clergy.—Commerce.—Bourbons.—Smuggling.—The Poor.—Mr. Bowles.—Roads.

I AM glad that you approve of my dwelling more than uſual on ſuch ſcenes, and little commencements of induſtry, as this country exhibits. There are in this miſerable world, but few of thoſe reſting-places where one wiſhes to ſtop and contemplate the riſe or infancy of human improvements, which is always more pleaſant than their old age or decline.

You know that iron is as yet almoſt the only export of this hardy race. It may amount to about 200,000 quintals a year. Their iron works are ſmall and ſcattered over the country for the convenience of wood and charcoal, in the uſe of which, great œconomy is obſerved. I doubt if our

our new method of uſing *coke* can produce ſuch good iron as this. We viſited ſeveral of thoſe little works, and were there told, that the eight or ten men, uſually employed in each, can produce about eighty quintals of pig from the ore *per* week, for 5½ reals *per* quintal; that the ore generally gives about one-third iron. This may ſet you about inquiring concerning ours in England.

Such is the connexion of the arts, that one brings many others along with it. One good ſtaple commodity in a country will create a plenty in every thing elſe. This little buſineſs of iron has improved them in ſeveral other things, by creating a demand for them, as in agriculture, planting, weaving, and in ſeveral trades for tools.

When you viſit this country, I would wiſh you to ſtop a while at Vergara, where, I think, you may be amply repaid for your time and trouble in climbing theſe mountains to get at it. This good Conde de Peña Florida has made theſe people muſical too. They now tranſlate and act Italian operas among themſelves, and fill all the parts

parts very tolerably, both of the ſtage and orcheſtra. This is probably of importance in civilizing a country. However well inclined you may be to laugh at ſuch things now-a-days, we have the wiſeſt men of antiquity on our ſide; and, I think, the moral effects of muſic are obvious even now, here, and elſewhere, increaſing and improving ſociability, humanity, and ſome of our beſt ſentiments.

In theſe, and other mountainous parts of Spain, ſome good timber ſtill remains, owing to the difficulty of bringing it away. They now talk of making roads for that purpoſe; but I doubt the execution of moſt Spaniſh government projects. Theſe poor mountaineers are the only people in Spain, who have induſtry and foreſight enough to plant and replace the conſumption. A large and good kind of pine or fir abounds yet in ſome parts of theſe northern mountains; above 6000, I was told, have been found in a ſpace of half a league ſquare. They have lately been able to get ſome oak down to the Cavada and St. Ander; and ſome has been carried down

down the Ebro for Carthagena, which, by the way, is their moſt convenient port and arſenal for work. They likewiſe carry ſome timber from Sierra Morena, down the Guadalquivir, for Cadix. They cut up timber to great waſte, uſing large oaks for ſmall veſſels, and, in general, ſacrifice too much to ſecurity. Such has been their hiſtory in almoſt every thing. *Too much caution*, might be the Spaniſh motto. Their works are generally too great, too ſtrong, too ſecure, but without ſufficient ſcience, taſte, or œconomy.

Bilbao—an agreeable place, a pretty little river, and a fine hilly country,—but the town again in the wrong place; on the wrong ſide of the river, and ſubject to be overflowed. The inhabitants offer to change it themſelves, but the court of Madrid refuſes them leave to do it. Moſt Spaniſh towns have ſome ſuch capital defect. There did belong to this port, before laſt war, about two hundred and fifty veſſels; but they do not now amount to one hundred and twenty, though they have been ever ſince increaſing. Such are the

the fruits they reap from their wars with England.

The wool exported here may be about 6000 bags *per annum*, of 50 *lb.* each, at about three reals *per lb.* But this export trade is now gradually moving to St. Ander, by order of the court, and is probably in conſequence of the jealouſy with which government begins to view the liberties and privileges of theſe provinces, as they begin to ſhew ſymptoms of proſperity. Some are gaining conſiderably here by our Americans, and they ſeem to get more of their ready money than the French.

Theſe northern Spaniards, ever active, hardy, generous, and free, have always been the beſt ſoldiers and ſailors of the peninſula. Their government is of the mixed kind, like all thoſe where there is any freedom left, and where each claſs has ſome influence; but here, the nobles and the church have, as uſual, been gaining more than their due ſhare, particularly the latter; and I believe one of the greateſt obſtructions in theſe provinces, to the progreſs and proſperity which might have been

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expected from their degree of political freedom, has been their religion, and the influence of their clergy, which is too great, and often tyrannically exerted. It is seen in their jealousy of strangers, arising from an excessive dread of whatever might endanger the purity of the faith, or diminish their own power. Indeed, throughout Spain, there is nothing of importance can be done, but the church must have a hand in it. I find, even here, that the clergy are admitted to their council of commerce, which might be a very convenient and a beneficial institution, if these gentlemen did not, as usual, take the lead, and obstruct its best operations.

The Dutch, French, and Germans, now furnish Spain and Portugal with a number of articles of trade that used to be sent from England. May not this partly arise from a kind of pride, or commercial greatness in our countrymen, who, disdaining the small profits, and the business of retail, will all be great merchants? Our formerly numerous and industrious retailers are certainly diminishing, and we are gradually losing

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the foreign ſupply of many articles. However, I find here yet one Engliſh warehouſe: with a tolerable aſſortment of goods: but it is ſoon to be given up, though almoſt the laſt of the kind remaining in Spain: whereas there uſed to be one, at leaſt, in every principal town. In the more inland parts, many Engliſh things that uſed to be common, are now not to be found. Some knives were ſhewn me for common uſe, at $2\frac{2}{3}$ reals *per* dozen, from St. Etienne en Forein. Can your people of Birmingham, with all their machinery, furniſh them here ſo cheap?

The jealouſy, I had almoſt ſaid hatred, of the preſent Spaniſh government to every thing Engliſh, appears ſtronger every day. All the effects of this Bourbon government, which were ſo wiſely foreſeen in the time of King William, we may expect, will gradually take place: and both the Spaniards and we may long regret, that they had not then ſpirit and union ſufficient to chuſe a king of their own nation, and a form of government of the right and ancient model, with ſuch improvements as

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we could have taught them to introduce. Though the Spaniards do not yet quite readily obey, and imbibe all the Bourbon policy and prejudices, they will in time, and probably muſt gradually conform; and the progreſs is perceptible enough in our own memory.

Smuggling increaſes here, as uſual, with the duties, which are almoſt annually augmented, on Engliſh commodities. It might increaſe ſtill more, if your uſual diligence in the retail, and the enterpriſing ſpirit of your merchants, were not conſiderably abated. I believe this government will ſucceed in excluding all the moſt important branches of your trade from this country and its colonies; and the more readily, as you ſeem to favour and aſſiſt them in it, by the falſe policy of complaiſance promoted by Mr. Grenville; a policy which will generally be more unſucceſsful with this nation than with almoſt any other, in obtaining any commercial or political advantages in return. This government may ſucceed ſtill better by the effects of a war: having once, by that means, ſhut out your trade,

trade, they will more eaſily keep it out: and this may be one of the objects they have in view by taking a part in this conteſt.

In ſhort, if you are politically wiſe, you will ſet this government down as your natural and irreconcilable enemy, and prepare to make the moſt of that ſtate of things which you cannot alter. And if you are commercially wiſe, you will ſmuggle all you can into their country and colonies. By theſe means, you will gain, or rather retain, the people, who are fond of all trade with the Engliſh, and you may always defy their government.

Another good thing beyond what we expected to find in this country is, at Pamplona, a very tolerable police in the proviſion and management of their poor; one of the moſt difficult parts of public œconomy. They receive and provide for all that come, for a certain time, and, I believe, aſſiſt them in their way to their reſpective homes. If they could employ them, and extend this kind of eſtabliſhment throughout the country, it might be of great ſervice to the nation. This is

originally, I believe, promoted by the clergy, who are generally very charitable in Spain. Though the plan partakes of the uſual defects, and of thoſe incident to their order, we muſt not condemn the whole becauſe ſome parts of it are imperfect. Their principal motive being the love of God, the good of their country, or the advantage of the poor people themſelves, are not ſufficiently conſidered. But theſe defects are found to attend this branch of police in almoſt all countries, except, perhaps, in Holland. It is ſaid, the Dutch have ſucceeded the beſt, in the moſt eſſential points of this branch, *viz.* by finding employment for their poor, and even the vicious, and in making them work.

To ſupply the wants of men, by any means independent of their own labour, is doing them, and the public, more harm than good, and will be only giving a premium to promote poverty as a profeſſion. When ſufficient employment for all the members, does not ariſe out of the nature of the ſociety, from the intereſt of individuals, we may doubt if any public manage-

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ment can, in any other way, ſupply the deficiency. Whatever ſyſtem, or mode of ſupply, is adopted, to find proper people who will be willing and able to apply ſufficiently to the adminiſtration, or deſcend to manage the private intereſts of people better than themſelves, will ſtill be difficult or impracticable in the preſent ſtate of ſociety. It will probably be always an object, either ſo ſmall as to fall under the direction of men too mean and intereſted; or it will be too great, and too troubleſome, to be well adminiſtered by any men.

To aſſiſt the poor with any good effect, it muſt probably be done at their own homes (while they can have any home), in ſupport of the domeſtic or natural ſtate of ſociety. The bringing them from thence can ſeldom anſwer any good purpoſe. They can then only be formed into communities unnatural, inactive, and burdenſome to the public. Such forced ſocieties ſhould never be attempted, till the natural are clearly proved to be inſufficient for the purpoſe in hand, which is ſeldom the caſe. When forced to adopt them, for

the purpoſes of war, education, or charity, we ſee their deficiencies, and they often fail in anſwering the ends propoſed. The Romans, for the purpoſes, at once, of ſecuring conqueſts, defence, and cultivation, planted military colonies, wiſely joining the natural with the military ſtate of ſociety.

I had the pleaſure, at Bilbao, of meeting with honeſt old Bowles, who has written a ſhort natural hiſtory of Spain. A plain ſenſible man of ſcience; a rare thing. You will ſee his book, which may not intereſt you much in England, but may be an amuſing companion in this country. I was ſorry to diſcover that he has never been ſo happy here as he was given to hope. Like moſt ſtrangers who engage in the ſervice of this nation, he is ſorry for having dedicated his time to the vain attempt of being uſeful to it. The rudeſt nations are always the moſt jealous of foreigners. The civilization of a people is not improperly eſtimated by the manner in which ſtrangers are uſually received and treated among them.

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I cannot quit theſe Baſcongada provinces without mentioning their roads, which they have executed nobly and œconomically, and in which the Spaniſh government has, fortunately for them, had nothing to do. The carrying roads zig-zag over ſome of their ſteep mountains, as at Sierra de Orduña, are really great and ſtupendous works, at once uſeful and magnificent; while Spain ſupinely looks on, as if aſhamed to be outdone, or too proud to imitate their example. For theſe twenty or thirty years paſt, the wiſe counſels of Madrid have been planning and making roads, and are only ſtill at the beginning of the buſineſs, having executed only a few leagues near the capital, and at the principal ſea-ports. They have not yet been able to take up the road from theſe frontiers, and carry it on, at leaſt, to Burgos, as they propoſed and promiſed.

LETTER V.

Mountains.—Cannon.—St. Ander.—Ships.—Foundery.—Military.—Aſturias.—Liberty with Security.—Monopolies.—Government.

WE now go on towards Galicia, following along the coaſt this courſe of mountains. You may conceive it a continuation of the Pyrenees, terminating in Cape Finiſterre, and forming one of the great pieces of the charpente, or ſkeleton, of this peninſula, which is compoſed of a few of theſe curiouſly connected ranges of mountains, and a few large plains between them. This range ſeems like a great wall, or mole of mountains thrown together, in a manner as if intended to keep the ſea out of the great plain of Old Caſtile, behind it. It ſeems now to ſeparate comfort, induſtry, and activity, from ſloth, dirt, and poverty. The countries it comprehends are Navarre,

the three Baſcongada provinces, Mons Eſpinoſa, Aſturias, and Galicia. It then turns to the ſouth to form and cut off Portugal. Retaining this idea, and by the map conceiving a large plain or valley to attend each of the rivers nearly according to its ſize or length, with mountains frequently between them, you will have a tolerable general idea of the whole.

But before we proceed, I muſt try to recollect ſome particulars. In Biſcaya, I met with Anciola, who made the hammered iron cannon. He ſeems to think, he has now conquered all the difficulties, and that it would be eaſier, on another trial, to ſucceed yet better. He has made a 3 pounder of 3 quintals weight, — an 8 pounder of 8 ditto,—a 24 pounder of 39 ditto,—and a 32 pounder of 52 ditto. He ſays, they can now be made to ſtand all ſorts of proof. But we muſt yet doubt the poſſibility of their being made all equally to be depended on, or of each being equally ſo throughout, till they have much more experience of them. Doubtleſs both the metals now in uſe, caſt iron and gun metal, are defective

for the purpoſes of artillery, while thoſe of the one kind often burſt, and the others melt; yet, I fear, it will be long before we find a metal without one or other of thoſe defects.

I am here farther fortified in my prepoſſeſſion in favour of mountaineers. From the Mons Eſpinoſa are generally choſen the guards for the king's perſon, and for ſeveral other moſt confidential ſervices. The Aſturian ſervants are everywhere preferred for the ſame qualities of honour and fidelity.

St. Ander and the Cavada form a very ſpacious, noble port, and might be much improved. But its being rather eaſily attacked, may have occaſioned this over-cautious government to neglect it, and the important uſes that might be made of it. It was here that Monſ. Gautier, their new French builder, conſtructed his firſt ſhips. I am told, by judges, that they are too crank and fine, and do not carry their lower guns high enough out of the water. Though he has ſince built ſome very good ſhips, moſt of their marine corps, I find,

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do ſtill think that none of his are equal to ſome that were built by their Engliſh builders, as by Obriant, and others. But Monſ. G. has been the means of getting all thoſe Engliſhmen diſplaced, on penſions, and is introducing the French methods and eſtabliſhments.

The Spaniards had better, perhaps, have improved upon their old conſtruction, than adopt ſo much of a new one. A certain magnificent greatneſs in the ſize and ſtrength of their ſhips was probably better ſuited to their pride and obſtinacy. It is not likely that their characters can ever be ſo changed, as to render them active and ready in working their ſhips, like the French and Engliſh. Certain points of national character, which cannot be readily changed, ſhould rather be indulged and turned to account. A wiſe reformer will attend to the diſpoſition of the people, and on that foundation build his ſyſtem.

Their cannon foundery at the Cavada, is lately on the decline, ſince it has been under the management of ſome Germans ſent them by France. Their guns have generally

generally failed, which brought them to deal with our Carron company, with whom, however, they ſoon began to be diſſatisfied. Their proof is too ſevere. — *Over-caution* again. In proving their guns, they fix the breech in a rock, to prevent the recoil, by which peculiar ſtrains and vibrations are probably given to parts of the piece, that never take place on actual ſervice. Bowles ſays, that the moſt material defect of their preſent foundery, is the want of the uſual mixture of their different ores: they uſed to mix one-third of Somoroſtro, their famous mine for ſoft iron, which, it ſeems, is now neglected.

Among contending opinions, in military as well as other matters, we cannot expect the beſt always to prevail: but where we ſee the worſt frequently adopted, to trace the cauſe we muſt look upwards: and we muſt not be ſurpriſed to find great deficiencies, in a nation ſo ſituated and circumſtanced; eſpecially when it is conſidered how much is now expected from men in the higher military ſtations, ſince the late advances in ſcience, and in all

all the arts relating to war, in which their nation, now ſo depreſſed and ſeparated from the reſt of Europe, muſt be left behind.

Without a head equal to judge and employ the different merits and talents of the ſubordinate members, however great thoſe merits may be, their beſt effects will be loſt. Perhaps there is only one effectual way of doing this, that which the King of Pruſſia has taken, by making himſelf acquainted with the principles of every thing, — with the duty of every rank and employ, — with the leading rules of every kind of work, trade, or profeſſion, — and with the perſonal merits and character of all his officers: all which he accompliſhes in the moſt direct and maſterly way, not through the uſual road of dulneſs, called application.

We now proceed on our difficult but delightful journey, often along the ſhore, by narrow paths, on dreadful precipices, with the additional horror of having thoſe places pointed out to us, where men and mules, &c. have fallen down, and have been

been daſhed to pieces before they reached the diſtant ocean beneath.

Theſe Aſturias preſent us with new and noble ſcenes and proſpects, in a ſtyle of beauty again different from the Biſcayan — mountains more ſteep, ſublime, and magnificent; more frequently cut with little rapid rivers, and narrow vales, overhung with rocks and woods. The mind is intereſted and elevated, and in moving along, anxiouſly purſues, with alternate hopes and fears, the changing ſcenery — the coaſt interſected with little bays and mouths of rivers, and ſtudded with rocky promontories; ſalmon fiſheries, ſcattered villages, romantically ſituated, though few and poor, diverſify the proſpects.

Great variety of ſtrata, marbles, and ores, appear in the precipices. There muſt be mines worth working here. The people are ſtrong and ruſtic, though not ſo numerous, nor ſo induſtrious, as the Biſcayan,—viſibly a different race, with more pride and indolence. I could here conceive a ſtrong reſemblance to the old Roman faces. The cauſe may be traced in their hiſtory.

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Several of theſe bays and rivers might be made tolerable ſea-ports, with little labour; and probably, ſome manufactures of the ſimpler kinds of induſtry might be introduced here with advantage. Theſe are, perhaps, now the only provinces in Spain that are capable of it; the reſt have exceeded that period; money having become among them too cheap or plenty. So that in the preſent ſtate of things, Spain cannot elſewhere force any manufacture that will be capable of contending with foreign induſtry, by which ſhe will be underſold in foreign markets, and thereby the chief motive and ſupport of the induſtry ſhe is trying to introduce, are cut off. To form a flouriſhing manufactory requires a foreign market. Home conſumption, and particularly that of Spain, will be inſufficient for the purpoſe.

To improve a country, I conceive that ſome degree of liberty and ſecurity muſt be firſt eſtabliſhed, and then induſtry, which is the real riches, will gradually, of itſelf, follow, and produce its own ſigns, money, ſtock, and credit. Whereas money,

ney, or any other of the ſigns, or arbitrary meaſure of riches, poured into a country before that period, will not promote but prevent induſtry, and tend to impoveriſh the people by diminiſhing their exertions. When they awake, and diſcover that money is neither food nor raiment,—that they have been led to miſtake the ſign for the ſubſtance, and have been only gathering the fallen and periſhable fruit, while they neglected the tree that produced it,—it is then too late to contend with the eſtabliſhed induſtry of cheaper countries. From thoſe they will continue to be ſupplied for their money, as long as they have it. Their cuſtoms, manners, and habits of life, will then be formed on this arrangement. We know that men, in general, will work only ſo far as they are forced to it by neceſſity, and the people of this nation will be forced to it at leaſt as late as any others. But during all this time the arts vaniſh, and the country is depopulated. Thus we may fancy and trace the decline of Spain.

In theſe provinces, however, where money is not ſeen to be ſo plentiful, and materials may be had, a ſpirit of induſtry might be raiſed by thoſe who underſtand the principles and the nature of it, but not by monopolies, prohibitions, or excluſive privileges; nor by royal manufactories, on great and expenſive plans at firſt, where jobs and ſuperintendance generally eat up all the profits: yet theſe are the only methods hitherto deviſed by this government for that purpoſe, and being ſo conformable to their character and deſigns, it is not probable they can ſoon advance far beyond thoſe ideas in arts and policy.

This government ſeems not to know, that the proper means of improvement are wanting, or deficient throughout the country: that there are no country gentlemen, or middle ranks, nor ſufficient capitals to undertake or aſſiſt in any great or uſeful improvements. The great proprietors are detained at court. Nor do they know, that ſmall and rude beginnings are generally the beſt, and that nature has deſtined

ſtined every thing, induſtry, invention, legiſlation, ſtock, credit, &c. to go through a progreſs and gradation.

But where pride and indolence are the inveterate habits of both government and people, and the higher claſſes are become unfit for buſineſs, there can be but little hopes of the return of induſtry, or of any of thoſe great and patriotic exertions which, under their ancient conſtitution, before they fell a victim to deſpotiſm, animated and enriched the nation, and through the ſucceſſive reigns of ſeveral princes, threatened Europe with too powerful a ſuperiority.

Full of thoſe romantic ideas, and planning, as I rode along, various ſchemes of improvement, it ſtruck me what a noble employment it would be for a prince of Aſturias to be inveſted with the actual adminiſtration of theſe provinces, which might, at the ſame time, promote the happineſs of thoſe people, and ſerve him as an apprenticeſhip in the art of governing a kingdom.

LETTER VI.

Rivadeo.—Winds.—Provincial Characters and Diſtinctions.—Galicia.—Government.—Marine.

TO enter Galicia, we croſs at Rivadeo, a large inlet of the ſea, the mouth of a river, and a noble ſpacious port. It might be much improved by moving ſome ſand-banks, and perhaps by moles and embanking to confine the ſtream. There was once an idea of making Rivadeo a king's port, and ſome doubts whether Vigo, Ferrol, or it, would anſwer moſt of the purpoſes.

Here are the ruins of a linen manufactory: ſeveral having been lately attempted in this province, but without effect, by government, on their uſual impracticable ſcale and manner.

We waited here two days, literally, for a fair wind to go on by land. Theſe

mountainous countries are frequently tormented, as they ſtyle it, with high winds, which deſtroy their little crops, and throw down mules, travellers, houſes, trees, &c. I believe moſt of theſe high cape countries and peninſulas that project into the ocean, are more ſubject to ſtorms than the inland plains. They here probably attract more than their proportion of the clouds and rains, ſo much wanted in the interior parts of this kingdom. The northern parts of Spain may be conſidered as a fine climate; they are rather ſubject to rain, and ſome ſtorms, but the atmoſphere being clear, and the fair weather pleaſant, the country is healthy.

Though there are ſome points of national character, and a manner, that more or leſs run through all the different inhabitants of this nation, as a certain appearance of gravity, and ſteady equanimity of behaviour, even when they are moſt facetious; though a ſameneſs of taſte, amuſements, and paſſions, prevail; yet there are obviouſly diſtinct races of people. The northern, the middle or Caſtilian, and the ſouthern

provinces,

provinces, are plainly different characters. Much might be written on theſe diſtinctions, and yet not be very uſeful or intelligible to thoſe who have not ſeen the country. The Catalan is probably the moſt induſtrious and active of the whole, but paſſionate and variable. This character of paſſion and ſenſibility, ariſing from a kind of irritability of the mind or frame, runs through the ſouthern provinces, and ſeems in general, I think, to follow the ſun throughout the world. Though there are frequently ſtrong ſhades of difference in character between neighbouring nations and provinces in the ſame latitude, as in this nation between the Catalan, Valencian, Andaluſian; there is likewiſe more reſemblance than they themſelves chuſe to perceive; for, like moſt neighbouring countries, they only ſee and diſlike each other's faults and differences.

This Galicia is again a different kind of country from the laſt, and though a continuation of the ſame range of mountains, theſe are of a different ſhape, ſoil, and compoſition, and inhabited by a diſtinct

race of people. Other nations are divided into provinces arbitrarily, but Spain is ſo by nature. This is generally effected by ſome remarkable rivers or mountains. Theſe diviſions of nature have been formerly ſeparate kingdoms, and more populous than at preſent; though all accounts of former population ſhould be received with doubts and allowances.

Theſe Gallegos ſeem moſtly poor and ragged, are rather a ſmall or ſhort race of people, and have a ſtrong reſemblance to the peaſantry of ſome of the French provinces. I fancy they are rendered ſhort and thick by the cuſtom of carrying burdens on their heads, particularly the women, who bear very heavy loads in that manner, and often carry the men acroſs the rivers on their heads in a baſket.

You know this province, uniting its forces with thoſe of Prince Henry of Burgundy, conquered Portugal from the Moors. There is ſtill a great reſemblance between the Portugueſe and theſe people in figure, manners, names, and language.

They

They are tolerably induſtrious, or rather laborious, but without much ſpirit or ſkill in their induſtry. The country is rather populous, and moſt of their mountains are in ſome degree of cultivation. They root and cut up the furze and bruſhwood with a hoe, an implement which they uſe much, and with ſome dexterity, though it is not ſo good as that uſed in Biſcaya. They then plough the land thus cleared with a couple of ſmall, poor oxen, or cows, and a miſerable little plough that coſts four or five ſhillings. Though laborious, their poverty obſtructs their improvements. They labour much to produce a little rye on grounds that would give them better things, as potatoes, and graſſes for their poor ſtarved cattle. In ſome of their lower lands, they breed a tolerable race, of which they ſend many into Spain. They have there, for winter food, ſome good turnips. From their good lands they get three crops in two years, rye, Indian corn, and turnips; but theſe are poor, and wear out the ſoil, as neither fallows, manure, nor ſufficient tillings, are uſed. In ſome places,

they turn water on the declivities for graſs, but with little ſkill or œconomy; drowning one acre with water that would ſerve ten. This produces a coarſe rank graſs, like ruſhes.

We Engliſhmen, my good friend, muſt viſit poor countries in order to know how little food will ſuffice for either the human or brute creation to ſupport mere exiſtence. That they ſhould here loſe numbers of their cattle from want, is not ſo ſurpriſing, as that ſo many ſhould ſurvive the winter, with ſuch ſcanty proviſion for them. But I mean not to be diffuſe, or deal in particulars. It is only general concluſions I wiſh to give you.

Population is certainly not the only criterion of the riches or ſtrength of a country. The character and qualities of the inhabitants are ſurely of importance, as well as their numbers. What would be the uſe, for example, of the higheſt population, if half were beggars? If the idle ſhould amount to ſuch a number as to require moſt of the ſurplus labour of thoſe who work, what revenue would be collected

lected for the ſtate? Yet this ſeems nearly the caſe in ſome parts of Spain; and hence the difficulty of levying any taxes on the land, or its produce. Nothing but the rapacity of the Catholic church, and the great influence of their clergy over the minds of this ſuperſtitious people, could make the tithes and religious contributions ſo productive as they are found to be in Spain.

Galicia however, though poor, is of great importance to Spain, particularly in two chief articles of export, cattle and people. The laſt annually emigrate in great numbers to Spain and Portugal, where they become exceedingly uſeful in agriculture, and a variety of menial ſervices, which the pooreſt ragged natives of thoſe countries are too proud and indolent to perform. Forty or fifty thouſand of theſe Gallegos are computed to be thus employed. Some of them return with a little money; and what does not go to the church is hoarded, and often buried. They cannot bring themſelves to part with any of it, even for the certain profit of improving their own

lands, and increaſing their income. This, and ſome other unnatural habits of avarice, ſufficiently ſhew that they are, and have long been, oppreſſed, probably by both church and ſtate.

The conſtant export or emigration of their people may be one cauſe of their population, and of the fecundity of their women, who are not afraid, as elſewhere, of having children. But it would be difficult to make ſome Spaniards comprehend that the export of any thing could poſſibly increaſe its produce.

There has been too great and too ſudden an influx of money here alſo, from various ſources, as well from the colonies, in common with the reſt of the nation, as from the king's works at Ferrol and Coruña, and from having opened theſe ports to the Havannah and Buenos Ayres. They now want to introduce manufactures, when it is too late and impracticable. This influx ſeems to impede inſtead of promoting agriculture. Beſides, the produce here ſeems to be limited by the nature of the ſoil, and by the character of the people,

and

and does not, as in moſt other countries, increaſe with the demand. From former plenty, there is now a ſcarcity of every thing but money.

Many of the effects of bad government can hardly be foreſeen, nor be eaſily accounted for when they happen. In the diſtance of a few leagues, I found the price of labour nearly doubled. About Mondonedo, four reals *per* day, and about Ferrol, ſeven and eight reals. There are ſimilar changes in the prices of proviſions, and eſpecially of corn, in ſmall diſtances, and in a very ſhort time. The variations within the year are ſeldom leſs than double, or two to one, and often more, in ſpite of their *taſas*, or aſſizes, and all their arbitrary laws and regulations to fix thoſe prices.

Theſe are ſubjects not undeſerving your ſtudy and obſervation. You will probably find, that this government is not conſtituted ſo as to diſcover, or ſufficiently to care, how things are connected in this world, as in a chain. They ignorantly detach an indeterminate number

of

of the links, and are ſurpriſed to find themſelves in an error when they come to the reſult. Indeed, thoſe ſecret connections are not yet well underſtood by any of us. We often ſee that the pretended and meddling encouragements of government, even on our own ſuppoſed good principles, do more harm than good. They little know or ſuſpect here, for example, that they cannot probably have even a good pair of ſhoes made in their country, without changing its government and religion.

Of Ferrol, and their marine department, I can ſay but little. We cannot examine nor inquire into theſe particulars, without giving umbrage. The natural curioſity of a traveller in this country, is often cruſhed in its infancy by a degree of jealouſy in the government, not to be met with in any other nation in Europe. If you ſhould be more fortunate, and, by proper recommendations, procure acceſs to ſee and inquire, you will then diſcover that the following obſervations are founded.

In

In their public works as well as meaſures, they follow daily, more and more, the counſels of their new friends the French, whoſe abſurdities, as uſual, they heighten in their imitations. Moſt of the great public works in Spain have been, and will probably continue to be, ſubject to great changes and variations. The natural uncertainty of engineering, and the diverſity of opinions among different and ſucceeding engineers, will probably coſt this country fully as much as it has done moſt other nations.

Spain will have every thing too great, and can therefore finiſh nothing; her works, her defences, thus remain more imperfect, and ſhe is leſs ſecure than if a mediocrity had been obſerved, better ſuited to her ſituation, funds, and abilities.

From what we can learn of her late marine regulations, ſome of them ſeem ſoon to threaten the extinction of all good ſhip-builders and ſea-officers. The firſt are all to be land engineers, *à la Françoiſe*, formed by theory, without practice, and without ever handling a tool: ſo that they

they muſt probably have their education in France. The ſea-officers are alſo to be formed chiefly by an education on ſhore. The preſent Guardias Marinas (midſhipmen) are moſtly young men, full grown, who have never been at ſea: and the few who have lately been ſent thither, have kept their beds moſt part of the voyage. Of the three parts of a ſea education, they have a chance of getting a part of one. Thoſe three parts, I conſider to be, firſt, The ſea habits, and gaining a taſte for the profeſſion, which can only be ſecured by going early to ſea; ſecond, the practical knowledge and abilities; and third, the theory, of which laſt they may here gain a portion. Few, however, at any ſchool, advance far in ſtudies that are merely ſpeculative, and when they do, they are but little advanced in their profeſſion. In our way of formation to a ſea life, if we miſs one thing, we may gain another, and ſeldom entirely fail in the two firſt and moſt eſſential parts of a ſea education.

Perhaps

Perhaps we ought ſo far to condeſcend to follow our neighbours, as to put a little more theory in our ſea education. A good ſchoolmaſter on board of each ſhip of war, ſeems to be one of the few eſſentials that require to be more attended to. And perhaps, too, our ſea-officers (who are not yet ſufficiently military) ſhould command the marines. Theſe two regulations would tend to improve and increaſe three valuable ſets of people, of ſingular importance to us, *viz.* ſea-officers, ſchoolmaſters, and marines.

They have had here, for ſeveral years, ſome good Engliſh inſtruments, to take the longitude of theſe capes, &c. procured by George Juan; but they have not been able to fix or uſe them. They ſhewed us, with ſome oſtentation, a man who had been able, without teaching, to clean ſome of them. I ſaw, the other day, thirty-ſix oxen employed in drawing an eighteen-pounder gun. You may gueſs from thence the miſerable breed of cattle here.

LETTER VII.

Of Travel and French Opinions.—Spaniſh Dependence and Decline.—Reflections.—Dr. R———. — Truth. — Books.

THOSE who wiſh to know Spain and Spaniards, muſt firſt reſide among them, to learn the language; then traverſe the country, and make ſome ſtay at different places, which may be marked out. It will require full as much pains and fatigue to know it well, as many better countries. You muſt be prepared to put up with many inconveniencies, with dirt, want, vermin, &c.: but you have heard enough of thoſe things, which are ſometimes exaggerated by our pampered countrymen, and you are probably provided againſt the worſt. Without the language, you can expect but little knowledge of this people, and leſs ſatisfaction. Their converſation will be the beſt part of your en-

tertainment, and is far beyond what you might expect from a people ſo ſecluded and circumſtanced as they are.

Do not always believe the French when they talk of Spain or Spaniards. They generally diſlike and miſrepreſent them. They ſeem wilfully to miſunderſtand the meaning and character of this nation, and have no taſte for their exquiſite wit and humour, nor for their muſic, their mirth, or for their noble and beautiful language, all far ſuperior to their own. Indeed, the French never arrive at ſpeaking the Spaniſh, ſo as to have or give any idea of its true grace and energy.

This ſenſible people muſt ſurely have made greater advances in the common improvements that lately ſurround them, and muſt have more nearly kept pace with the reſt of Europe, and particularly with France, ſince their cloſe connection with that nation, if there had not been ſome political or Bourbon foul play, employed to prevent it: a proceeding founded, perhaps, on that falſe policy of keeping them more dependent on France. The dependence of poverty

poverty and ignorance, however flattering to national vanity, can never be equally ſatisfactory, or beneficial, with the friendſhip of a rich, induſtrious, and well-informed nation.

Beſides, thoſe very means, this confined and inſidious policy, by which they fancy the connection is ſecured, may be the very cauſe of breaking it. Any ſubordination between nations, or ſeparate ſocieties (which can ſo ſeldom be juſt to each other), cannot long be borne by the inferior, nor ever be laſting or ſecure. Even actual force cannot always ſecure it. There would be a degree of wiſdom in ſome certain ſtrokes of political generoſity and juſtice, which might have effects as yet unknown in the political world. Nations would ſucceed much better by mutual aſſiſtance, than by trying to pull each other down. Although this connection between France and Spain ſeems now fixed for a long time to come, yet ſeveral things may be puſhed too far, old antipathies revived, and effects produced that may tend to diſſolve the connection when leaſt expected: but I am ſorry to ſee, that

you

you do not ſeem in England, of late, to watch and underſtand thoſe political matters. Foreign politics, I fear, is not your *fort*.

To ſearch for the cauſes of the late general decline of Spain, and of the ſlow advances of every thing attempted to reſtore her, might be an inſtructive inquiry; but it would be like writing their hiſtory. There is probably as much to be learned from the fall as from the riſe of nations, if nations could learn, or take example, from each other. Leſſons might be found here applicable enough to other kingdoms; as there ſeems to be ſtill the ſame tendency throughout the reſt of Europe, from the modern rapacious ſpirit of commerce and gain, to follow the ſteps of Spain, and to graſp at trade and riches till they ſqueeze them to death. Deceitful peace ſucceeds commercial wars. What contradictions, even in terms! Pedlars and plunderers ſeem to govern Europe by turns. Nations and individuals are equally fond of monopolies, which generally ruin them at laſt, and diſlike all competition, which, nevertheleſs, does them infinite ſervice. Both men and

nations require competitors, or they would go to ſleep, like the Spaniards.

You ſee I am naturally enough inclined to follow your advice, and indulge in general reflections, in ſearch of truths of ſome importance, in which indeed I wiſh chiefly to deal. They may contain more novelty and originality, by my being, as it were, out of the world. Not that I have any great confidence in thoughts or ſyſtems fabricated in retirement, which may ſometimes aſſiſt the fancy, but ſeldom the judgment. It requires the frequent colliſion of ſociety, the freedom of converſation, and the kind offices of friendſhip, to purge and refine our ſpeculations, and render them fit for uſe. I meant to give you ſome general ideas, ſuppoſing the particulars already ſufficiently known, and ſet you ſome diſtant land-marks to guide your courſe, but not to ſave your ſteps. We may direct, but cannot much diminiſh your labour. Such is the inevitable condition of every human acquirement, and even of human exiſtence: we muſt go through troubles that belong to both.

Churches,

Churches, convents, palaces, have already been deſcribed by travellers, and I am glad to be relieved from the taſk. Among theſe, and a variety of other objects which excite attention in this country, you will often be ſtruck with the ſtrange mixture of good and bad taſte,—of excellent with deſpicable things,—of finery with dirt and poverty. Any detail of their religious or ſuperſtitious ceremonies, I ſhould think rather unworthy of your attention. Their influence on the people is of conſequence, and I therefore wiſh you to be able to perceive and detect it. Their cuſtoms, amuſements, viſits, dreſs, food, &c. you will find in various travellers, as Clerke, Baretti, and others.

You are right to read Dr. R——, and others, on Spaniſh affairs, before you leave home. I ſent for the book, got it on ſhore with difficulty, and am now reading it, on your recommendation. I like the Doctor much as a fine writer. One cannot help wiſhing he had ſeen and examined Spain and Spaniards, before he wrote about them; as he has not, I think, always juſt ideas of

their paſt, preſent, nor probable future condition, character, and progreſs. He takes ſome pains not to diſoblige the Spaniards, and to excuſe, or palliate, many of their moſt atrocious cruelties.

Some of the natives here, the beſt acquainted with their colonies and hiſtory, have confeſſed to me, that they think even the Abbé Raynal's book nearer the truth. Sacred truth, however graceful and elegant her form may be drawn, ſhould, nevertheleſs, come naked, or at leaſt not overdreſſed, adorned, and diſguiſed, from the hands of the hiſtorian. From which claſs of writers are we to look for her? I fear it is not always from the ſtudies of the learned by profeſſion, that we are to expect thoſe bold outlines of truth that ſerve at once to inſtruct, to inſpire, and advance mankind. But how ſhall we know her by ſight, eſpecially if in full dreſs? We muſt labour in learning to read in her mirror, and to become acquainted with the outlines of thoſe objects that are reflected in it.

You muſt beware of truſting too much to books, and to what is called learning, as well as of the ambition to become an author too ſoon yourſelf. But I think it is to be feared, that book-making may fall into a ſort of diſcredit, and be too much deſpiſed by ſome who have gone the fartheſt in uſeful knowledge; who have, as it were, left books behind, and are not much inclined to write what they know, indolently leaving it to the profeſſedly learned, to the deſigning or intereſted, to thoſe of middling capacity, who have more patience, more vanity, or ſome ſiniſter motives: ſome of theſe, encouraged by bookſellers, ſtand ready to ſnatch every ſubject out of the careleſs hands of genius and knowledge; and give it diſfigured or incomplete to the world. As there are no great hopes from your project of reſcuing authors out of the hands of the bookſellers; the progreſs of learning and knowledge muſt ſtill depend much on the conduct and information of thoſe men. You ſhould try, if poſſible, to give them a better education, by making it more common and eaſy; men of learn-

ing and of liberal minds might make a figure in that profeſſion, and do infinite good.

When we ſhall have learned to think more and to write leſs, how many huge volumes may be contracted into a few pages! I think good abridgments of what is already written, would now be the moſt uſeful publications.

It is the duty of the preſent generation to curtail and arrange the ideas of the laſt. I ſhall be glad to join every aſſiſtance toward ſuch a plan, in any of the ways you mention. Every little helps. You ſhould think of encouraging your evening, your Sunday and day ſchools, and of increaſing popular country lectures, and thoſe itinerant philoſophers, with their cart-loads of machinery; and likewiſe the literary ſocieties in the country towns. They may all together be of ſome ſervice to that yet ignorant country of ours, eſpecially if, at the ſame time, you can perſuade our legiſlature to do ſomething towards it,—ſomething that ſhould improve and increaſe the day-ſchools, aboliſh the board-

boarding-ſchools, and promote uſeful knowledge: the ſhorteſt way to it muſt always be the beſt; and eſpecially now, that the objects of ſtudy increaſe with civilization and improvements. It is high time for authors and teachers to ſteer by ſome north-weſt paſſage, directly to truth and ſcience, and not lead us round by long and flowery ways, in which we loſe ſo much time, and may never arrive at the end in view.

LETTER VIII.

Bowles.—Manufactories.—Pontz.—History.—Letters.—Campomanes.—Knowledge, and useful Arts.

WHEN you come to Spain, make it in your way, if you can, to see Bowles. You will probably find him in his favourite province of Biscaya. You may have read his book. I believe it may be depended on, as far as it goes. This nation is not yet in a condition to profit by reading, nor can we believe that their government means they should, till we see other means employed, besides that of giving them books. But even these are distributed with a very sparing hand. The complete chain of useful knowledge, and the freedom of research, will probably long be excluded by inquisitorial tyranny. Where philosophers, and their books, are considered as dangerous, they can have few

or no good effects; and we ſhould not be ſurpriſed to hear of Mr. B— being in the Inquiſition for the pains he has already taken. I wiſh he was as well acquainted with his native country, England, as he ſeems to be with Spain and Germany.

It is rather ſurpriſing to find him, and moſt of the writers of this country, always recommending manufactories to its inhabitants. Many of thoſe manufactories are probably impracticable in its preſent ſtate, except a few of the moſt ſimple kinds, as a proper beginning. One trade often requires a hundred others in order to carry it on; of theſe half would not be found in the country, nor could be brought into it. They ought firſt to produce materials and hands, and perhaps ſhould begin by encouraging the export of thoſe very materials which they are always prohibiting, by which means they diminiſh the produce, the population, agriculture, and induſtry, of their country. I have heard that their miniſter, the Conde de Heranda, had ſome right ideas on theſe ſubjects; that he intended promoting, at firſt,

firſt, a few ſimple ſtaple fabrics, and only the produce of the raw materials in others. But you know he was not permitted to go on.

Bowles, you will perceive, evades treating much of the practice and actual ſtate of the uſeful arts, and leaves it to Pontz, who hitherto confines himſelf moſtly to the trifling remains of the fine arts; and having caught the rage of writing and deſcribing, inſtead of giving drawings of every thing, as at firſt propoſed, his volumes go on increaſing, while the moſt important articles of information are not yet touched upon by either.

You are right in reading Mariana, his continuators, and others of their hiſtorians, though moſt of them are rather tedious and unintereſting; at leaſt they may appear ſo, till you ſee the country. You will find moſt of them named in Antoni, Geddes, Clerke, Robertſon, &c. But much of the information which you are collecting from books, and from me, I fear you will neither comprehend nor retain near ſo well as by acquiring it here on the ſpot.

Your

Your letters of recommendation for Madrid, &c. are very proper and neceſſary in this country, though we have always found the circular letter and bills of Sir R. Herries and Co. to be quite ſufficient for all the purpoſes both of credit and introduction, wherever we went; and have, in conſequence, been treated with all the kindneſs and hoſpitality that almoſt any other letters could have procured *. However, recommendations to great and learned men may likewiſe be of uſe; and that to Campomanes will anſwer ſeveral good purpoſes. You ſhould firſt read his books. You will find him full of uſeful knowledge, though perhaps a little too much confined to reading and to French ſyſtems, and hence a little deficient, like moſt men of learning of the preſent day, in practical knowledge, actual obſervation, and travel. But he can talk and write fluently, and to the purpoſe,

* As a convincing proof of the merits and utility of Sir Robert's plan, we find Meſſrs. Morland, Hamerſley, and Co. have alſo adopted it.

on

on works, arts, and places, which he never ſaw. Though one of the beſt informed of their politicians, he is ſtill attached to ſome of the old prejudices; as the neceſſity of ſtrict prohibitions, and of making Spain a manufacturing country, almoſt before it is peopled and cultivated,—of watching and trimming the balance of trade, expecting government to regulate every thing, and enter into details for which the very beſt kinds are inadequate, and ſtill more the worſt. He ſuppoſes that public edicts, and œconomical ſocieties, can reform, can people, and enrich the country, though they have had already ſufficient experience of the inefficacy of all thoſe methods. However, he improves as he writes. He ſeems candid and liberal enough to open his eyes by degrees, and his laſt publications are always the beſt. He has ſet his countrymen right in many eſſentials; and when he comes to read A. Smith, and ſee ſtill more of the inſufficiency of their preſent form of government, he may be convinced how little can be done or expected,

pected, without changing its conſtitution. We ſhould not have expected to ſee him prepoſſeſſed with quite ſo many national prejudices; nor to find him ſo warm an apologiſt for the Spaniſh enormities, cruelties, and rapacity, in their American conqueſts. It is too late: — the facts are too well atteſted to be called in queſtion now. Nor ſhould we have ſuppoſed him ſubject to ſo many of their political errors, —as thoſe of aiming at things incompatible,—at the character and effects, at once, of parſimony and of luxury, — of poverty and riches. They want the nation to be ſober, temperate, œconomical, and at the ſame time, active and enterpriſing in purſuit of the objects of taſte and pleaſure; forgetting that arts and luxury muſt afford mutual aſſiſtance. But notwithſtanding all this, he has great merit, and is rather loſt or miſplaced here; and he may yet have the honour of ending his days in the Inquiſition, which, in this country, is perhaps a teſt of the merit of a man, as burning is likely to be of a book. I hear he is one of the four already marked

out by that tribunal for puniſhment, if it is found neceſſary to the eſtabliſhment of their power, or to the excluſion of knowledge. He is here preaching in a wilderneſs. They do not underſtand him, in a country where they are yet doubting and debating whether excluſive companies be not the beſt mode of trading to their colonies. The people, willingly deceived by their aſſuming and inefficient government, vainly place their hopes in the operation of its edicts, inſtead of helping themſelves. You may from thence conceive how far they are behind, and have yet to go.

I muſt differ from Dr. R———, and think that the low ſtate of literature, taſte, and knowledge here, appears from their authors being ſo indiſcriminately admired among them, and by their paſſing without criticiſm, whoſe laſh they ſo often deſerve. Though peruſed by few, beſides the mere readers of this nation, one would expect that ſome country apothecary or tradeſman might ſtep forth, and tell theſe gentlemen, and the world, where they are wrong. It is but too plain, that a want of uſeful know-

knowledge, and a certain indifference and negligence in the moſt important ſubjects, are now but too univerſally prevalent throughout this once celebrated country.

An inquiry was lately made, in two conſiderable towns in this province, for any one who could gauge ſome caſks which were to be received in a contract for the king; but no ſuch perſon could be found. Indeed, ſcientific merit of any kind could not now be eaſily produced or expected here, nor be of much uſe to the poſſeſſor. It would lead to nothing — but to the Inquiſition.

The very few wants and conveniencies, the miſerable appearance of the common people in this country, are very ſtriking to one lately arrived from England. Their want of taſte, and of variety of colour, even in their Sunday's dreſſes, which are moſtly confined to brown and black, or to the natural colour of the wool, and the great numbers who are always in rags, render a crowd of theſe people at a fair or a holiday, a melancholy, inſtead of a cheerful ſight, as with us. But I find no country people

any.

anywhere ſo well clothed as thoſe in England; nor the uſeful arts, I think, anywhere ſo far advanced. This is not ſufficiently known to other nations. A tour to our iſland might have been of ſervice to ſeveral modern writers of the continent. On ſome ſubjects I always wiſh to know if the author has been in England, before I read his book. Perhaps the beſt way to improve the other nations, would be for their princes to travel, and particularly to viſit and examine England.

LETTER IX.

Talents.—Converſation.—Trades.—Improvements.—Princes.

ALMOST every country excels in ſome art, ſome talent or abilities, above others. I think the Spaniards can dance, ſing, ſhave, and make chocolate, with any people in Europe; but I fear there are but few other of the uſeful or ornamental arts which they now poſſeſs to any degree of perfection. We muſt except ſpeaking, which I had almoſt forgotten, and in which they certainly excel, by means of their fine language, which ſeems naturally to flow in a manner that invites the ſpeaker to a kind of eloquence and urbanity.

We may partly, though not entirely, account for their converſation being ſo ſuperior to their writing. The dread of the Inquiſition prevents men of letters

from truſting their ideas to paper; it terriſies us all, hangs on our minds, and retards our pen as we write. I feel half afraid of it even here in my own room as I ſit writing to you, and with ſome little dread and reluctance venture to ſet down the name.

The buſineſs of gilding, and that of printing, ſeem yet pretty well preſerved and executed in Spain; and one meets with an ingenious workman here and there; but few other trades are ſupported and practiſed as they ſhould be. Their *fomento*, as they call them, or regulations, ſocieties, and premiums, for encouraging arts and induſtry, can never probably produce much good, though they have expended as much in that way as any nation. Perhaps they had better do nothing, as the ſureſt way of doing no harm. Indeed, moſt governments, in their officious encouragement of ſuch things, are often either like the fly on the wheel; or retard more than they aſſiſt. They cannot always make men improve when and how they pleaſe. We muſt be left to ourſelves

in the objects, in the choice, and meaſure of our exertions. Let us have but freedom and ſecurity enough, and we ſhall endeavour to better and improve our condition, and ſhall find out the way to do it more advantageouſly than can be pointed out to us by any ſuperior power whatever.

Though it be difficult to change the character, or even to quicken the progreſs, of ſuch a people, yet a reflecting mind cannot help ſpeculating ſometimes, and thinking of the beſt way of going about it. Let us ſuppoſe then a young prince, heir to the crown, to travel, to fall into good hands, and to make all the progreſs in uſeful ſcience, in the knowledge of men and things, that you and I can conceive: and then we may likewiſe ſuppoſe him to be equal to the chuſing and preparing a ſet of proper and enlightened men for his future miniſters, ſecretaries, profeſſors, biſhops, &c. and determined to make uſe of all the virtue and knowledge in his dominions, of whatever

claſs or party, and to bring in more from abroad.

However parties may traduce each other, I cannot conceive any claſs of men in this age, to be totally uſeleſs or very dangerous. I believe all may be employed ſo as to produce the good of the whole, when they are properly placed. Even the timid or cruel bigot might be turned to ſomething uſeful; though we might not chuſe, for example, to employ him in a war againſt the Pope.

In ſhort, I can conceive ſuch a prince at length ſettled on the throne, and undertaking to reform his kingdom by degrees: to begin by aboliſhing the Inquiſition at once, and then the friars gradually, one order at a time, or leaving for a while ſome of the moſt uſeful. Their rents might be advantageouſly applied to public uſes, as to relieving the people from ſome of the moſt oppreſſive taxes in their reſpective provinces, in order to intereſt them in the cauſe, and get them on his ſide. He might have influence enough to oblige the Pope to acquieſce, and diſpenſe

with the monaſtic vows, or might penſion them for life, and diſpoſe of them as has been done with the Jeſuits.

He might then begin to admit of religious toleration, firſt in the ſea-ports, and then extend it gradually to the moſt inland and improvable provinces, and to the colonies. Thoſe would thence gradually become populous and induſtrious, and many advantages would ſoon appear, and gain the public opinion. Perhaps he might, in time, extend it to be a natural and complete toleration: by ſtopping gradually the funds that ſupport the clergy, as they die off, leaving the people to pay and chuſe their own teachers, all ideas of a ſtate religion, or of intolerance, would ſoon be baniſhed; or ſome ſeeds of this kind might be ſown for the benefit of poſterity. Nor need it at all be feared, that real religion would ſuffer by ſuch a change: there has been already, in North America, experience enough to be convinced of the contrary. A juſt and equal government wants not the aſſiſtance of a ſuperſtitious religion: it is only tyranny

and injuſtice that require ſuch help, in order to terrify and ſubdue the people. It is evident that religion is hitherto neceſſary to man, and he will probably be moſt attached to that of his own choice.

We may then ſuppoſe our prince almoſt wiſe and liberal enough to ſee the deſtructive policy of maintaining diſtant colonies, and that he may be willing to ſettle them into ſeparate kingdoms, having previouſly prepared them for it, and taught them by partial and gradual experiment, how to govern themſelves. This would ſoon give them activity, induſtry, and ſelf-importance; and each kingdom would then have as much of the other's commerce as would be neceſſary, and no more.

Sufficient freedom and ſecurity would render even Spaniards induſtrious. For I muſt ſuppoſe my prince capable of reſtoring them their conſtitution, and probably with improvements; giving them their ancient Cortes, but with a more equal and adequate repreſentation. He would not then be jealous or afraid of the proſperity of his own people; and would encourage the

the nobility to live on their eſtates, or to travel and learn from other nations. He would likewiſe endeavour to reform the ſchools, and improve the education of his people, not ſuffering this taſk to be confined to the clergy, but entruſting it to ſome choſen men, who would teach more uſeful knowledge, with more beneficial habits and virtues. I will not detain you by enumerating what he might do.

Such a prince would be the father of his country, and ſuch a dreaming ſpeculator as you may have been ſuppoſing me to be, would think he could hardly fail of ſucceeding, at leaſt in part. But when we come to aſk how and where ſuch a prince, and ſuch miniſters, could be found, or formed, in ſuch a country, the viſion vaniſhes, and we muſt be content to leave them as they are, perhaps for ages yet to come. All ſuch innovations are probably impracticable under a Bourbon government, in which the lower claſſes remain ſo poor, debilitated, and dependent; ſubjected to the church, and unwilling to be

emancipated; while the power of thoſe who fancy themſelves intereſted in their ſubjection, is not to be controlled; while the government is too abſolute, and therefore too indolent, to be forced, or inclined to take all the trouble neceſſary to the doing real good, or of being informed; and, in ſhort, while they are the nominal poſſeſſors of the gold, and only the miners and factors for the reſt of Europe.

LETTER X.

Government and Character of the French and Spaniards.

I THINK moſt nations, except this, ſeem to have the ſpecies of government nearly ſuited to their character. How much the one is produced by the other, would be difficult to determine. Perhaps much of the character is derived from the government, and reciprocally they go on with a kind of mutual influence, gradually wearing into a fitneſs for each other.

The inhabitants of France and thoſe of Spain, ſo oppoſite in diſpoſition, probably require different kinds of government, but they are now nearly of the ſame kind; and hence we may conclude one of them to be wrong, which is probably that of Spain. The French inconſtancy, heat, impetuoſity, and the Spaniſh ſteady patience, natural pride and indolence, muſt require different treat-

treatment. Different ſoils and ſituations muſt have different culture to make them productive. Theſe two nations can never find much to borrow from, or to like in, each other. They ſeem originally intended to be enemies; and if left to themſelves, the leading principles of their governments would probably be as oppoſite as their taſte and character.

The character of the French,—their peculiar humours, fire, and caprice, perhaps render them unfit to be truſted with that degree of liberty, which to other nations ſeems neceſſary. Unable to judge of oppreſſion or injuſtice but from fancy or faſhion, they muſt, perhaps, be guided and reſtrained by a deſpotic hand. And ſo long as that can be conſidered as the hand of a father, and deſpotiſm can conceal its character under the cloak of amiable and liberal manners and ſentiments; while an open and amicable intercourſe is kept up between ſovereign and people by proper *media*, it may long go on ſmoothly, and even ſometimes with a degree of proſperity far beyond what could have been expected;

but

but we have now probably ſeen its limits, or *maximum* of ſucceſs, and may propheſy that it cannot go much farther. Though the prince acknowledge himſelf tied by no conſtitutional bonds, theſe are partly, though precariouſly, ſupplied by his attention to the national prejudices and public opinion, to the advices and remonſtrances of his own tribunals, which, though originally inſtituted to enlarge his authority, have gradually aſſumed a kind of right to control his edicts, and almoſt to repreſent the nation, or at leaſt to deceive it.

But the Spaniſh character ſeems to require and deſerve a government of freedom and ſecurity, as a neceſſary incitement to the good and proper remedy for its bad qualities. It would be requiſite for the exerciſe of their natural good ſenſe, of their rational and meditative turn of mind, and their other powerful and diſtinguiſhing qualities, as pride, honour, firmneſs, magnanimity, which we know they poſſeſs, when excited by ſufficient motives. It would likewiſe ſerve as a cure to their indolence,—to their falſe notions of honour

and

and religion. But all the modern changes in their government have had a contrary courſe and tendency.

By peruſing their hiſtory, you will trace ſome of the cauſes and the progreſs of their grandeur and of their decline. The union of ſeveral kingdoms under one wiſe head (Ferdinand) ſuddenly formed a great power, invigorated by the ferment of liberty, and the natural operations of their then free, though complicated and imperfect ſyſtems of government. Their internal and Mooriſh wars,—their diſcovery of the new world,—their acceſſion to Auſtria, produced great objects of national exertion. Diſtant wars, conqueſt, defence, diſcovery, commerce, all conſpired to call forth the moſt powerful public and individual efforts, and to make them really great. But national greatneſs knows no bounds. It generally at laſt overſhoots them all, and exhauſts itſelf. Then the invaſion of their rights by Charles V. and the final deſtruction of their conſtitution by his ſucceſſors, became more than ſufficient to overbalance and bear down all the advan-

tages

tages of their acquiſitions: and the baneful effects of over-ſtrained efforts, of miſtaken policy, and of deſpotiſm, ſoon began to appear. The nation, as it became, by the loſs of its liberties, leſs able to bear additional weights, was, as uſually happens, more heavily loaded, and ſoon exhauſted, by the ambitious, and then uncontrollable purſuits of its princes. Its operations abroad became more languid, while at home the national character degenerated; till, by the help of other unfavourable incidents, it ſunk at laſt into a dependence on that very power with whom it formerly contended with ſucceſs.

As the nation had neither ſpirit, force, nor wiſdom enough left, to chuſe a king and government of its own on the death of Charles II. the Spaniards are obliged to ſubmit to be governed by the arbitrary ſyſtems of Bourbon politics, in which the intereſt of the country does not form even a part. They have already paid ſeverely for that connection, were it only by the wars into which it has led them, in which they had no real intereſt, and for which

they were totally unfit and unequal, after being ſo irrecoverably debilitated. How different their ſituation from that of former periods, when they could make all their foreign connections act ſubſervient to their own views, and when the council of Vienna was well known to be only the miniſter of that of Madrid.

Whatever apparent or pretended improvements have been introduced by the Bourbon government, have certainly not been in favour of freedom, nor of the ancient conſtitution; nor has the increaſe of forms, councils, or ſubdiviſions, tended to facilitate, but rather to embarraſs and retard, the public buſineſs, and to compoſe a complex ſyſtem of tyranny, which removes almoſt every object that could excite great talents or induſtry, or that could raiſe ſuch minds to great or noble actions.

From theſe facts, and their numerous conſequences, — the negligence and corruption of people in public office, the impoſſibility of redreſs for any perſon they may chuſe to oppreſs, and the want of legal or conſtitutional intercourſe between the

the ſovereign and the people;—we cannot expect to find in this nation any great or continued efforts of public ſpirit to ſtem the torrent of national corruption. Their government naturally produces a deſpondency in all, and more eſpecially in the lower and moſt important claſſes of people. In ſhort, their new government ſeems only intent on converting them entirely into Frenchmen, which they never will be, and on ſubduing the remaining magnanimity, and other virtues left in their character; in which it may ſucceed by time, inſidious policy, and artificial ſyſtems of oppreſſion. Seeing them now become ſlaves to ſuperſtition and arbitrary power; their former character and ſpirit enervated and ſubdued; the poverty and deſolation of the country; and comparing former periods with the preſent, the effects of their ancient conſtitution with thoſe of its abolition, we may not heſitate to conclude that their native temper and genius are incompatible with a deſpotic authority, and cannot appear while under ſuch oppreſſion. Nothing leſs than civil and religious liberty can reſtore their

character, and re-people their now naked and arid plains.

Your ideas of the Spaniſh character are not, I believe, ſo wrong as thoſe of many others. I cannot pretend to eſtimate for you, how much they have loſt of their ancient character, nor decide between the real merits of their old cavalier, and their modern fine gentleman; we have natural prepoſſeſſions in favour of the old, and muſt fear that they have loſt, by the decline of chivalry, ſome of thoſe high notions of honour, without obtaining always the advantages of our modern refinements of ſentiment, which, when ſeaſoned with good ſenſe, come in ſometimes tolerably well to ſupply the place of that old enthuſiaſm of honour. They muſt excuſe us, if we doubt their having gained by this change; and if we likewiſe doubt their claim to a ſuperiority in manners, or in pleaſure, while they affect to laugh at the rigid notions of their anceſtors, and conſider pleaſure as conſiſting in unreſtrained and unrefined indulgence.

Their military and political talents were, for a long time, confeſſedly the firſt in the world,

world, and were not, perhaps, outdone by the Romans themſelves in their beſt times. And though they are now fallen even lower than the world imagines, yet I would not adviſe any nation to treat them with much real contempt, nor think that they can therefore be eaſily defeated or eaſily managed. Their councils ſtill retain much of their former obſtinacy, and of that impenetrable myſtery for which they were always remarkable; and their troops, though now few, and not well formed, yet by ſome good officers, and a few campaigns, might perhaps be rendered again invincible.

Some ſenſible Swiſs, about the time of the latter Philips, writes, "Qu'ils ſe roi-"diſſent contre le mauvais ſuccès, et ne "repoſent jamais moins qu' après avoir "travaillé avec ſuccès. Que leur âme eſt "vaſte, d'un courage à qui les difficultés "n'apportent point de dégoût ni le tems "de laſſitude." You know Charles V. uſed to ſay, "Time and I againſt any "other two." Our Swiſs elſewhere obſerves, "Que l'Eſpagnol eſt ſupérieur à "toutes les menaces ou promeſſes. D'un

" tempérament propre à toutes les fonctions
" de l'âme; par la profondeur de ſes pen-
" ſeés il embraſſe toute l'étendue de l'ob-
" jet qu'il ſe propoſe; il en voit toutes les
" parties. Mais quelquefois le moment
" de l'exécution paſſe pendant qu'il déli-
" bère: mais ce malheur ne lui arrive
" guère dans le cabinet ou à la négociation,
" où ſon eſprit arrête et fixe, il ait moyen
" de faire paroître plus adroitement la
" force, et la délicateſſe de ſes reſſorts, qui
" l'aſſurent du ſuccès de tout ce qu'il peut
" lors manier avec loiſir et ſans être preſſé.
" La lenteur Eſpagnole quoiqu' elle bronche
" quelquefois pour vouloir aſſeoir le pied
" trop ſûrement, eſt accompagnée d'une
" conſtance extraordinaire dans le malheur,
" et d'une perſévérance ſans relâche, d'une
" vigueur infatigable à pourſuivre ſes avan-
" tages. Si tous les arts lui manquent, elle
" a recours aux traités et aux conférences,
" et elle en tire d'une façon ou d'autre, le
" fruit qu' elle en pouvoit attendre. Ainſi
" Dieu, pour maintenir en un point preſqu'
" égal la valeur des deux nations (Françoiſe
" et Eſpagnole), a oppoſé à la vivacité et

" au

" au grand eſprit de l'une, la prudence et " la fermeté de l'autre, afin que ce qui " manque à celle-ci de promptitude ſoit ré- " compenſé par ſon attention à tout ce qu' " elle fait." Their efforts, during their fall, and after many ſignal loſſes, deſerve admiration; and the extent of their decline was not perceived till long after it had happened. Our Swiſs obſerves, " Que " leur chaleur lente et naturelle agit ſans " précipitation, et ſouffre ſans altération ce " qu' elle ne peut réſoudre, pour le don- " ner à guérir au tems." This fire was long reſpected and dreaded after it was extinct; the world continued afraid of its mere aſhes. The political world is ſubject to habits and prepoſſeſſions like individuals, and the dread of a power once formidable, we ſee ſubſiſt after its decline, and after the cauſes of dread have ceaſed.

LETTER XI.

Travellers.—Galicia.—Lands.—Taxes.—Law.—Women.

To Mr. F——.

Coruña.

THE complain is, I believe, rather general, that Spain is little known: but this muſt proceed more from want of readers than of writers; for, upon inquiry, you will find that much has been written on the ſubject. It may be true, that ſuch writers are leſs read or known than thoſe of other countries; that writings are inſufficient to furniſh the ideas generally expected from them; and that this peninſula, lying out of the common tracks of communication, is therefore leſs viſited: but thoſe few viſitors, I think, generally write; and though the country does not perhaps furniſh more matter than ſome others, if many more were to travel thither, each

each might ſtill find ſomething new to obſerve.

Nations cannot be too much acquainted or connected with each other: the good effects are obvious from hiſtory and experience, and ſeem to be nearly in proportion to the cloſeneſs and intimacy of thoſe connections. You ſee how quickly our iſland has improved ſince the union. Nations freely opening their ports and commerce, their laws and improvements, to each other, will be the moſt indubitable proofs of the real improvement of the world.

This corner of the peninſula lies even more out of the common track than the reſt of it, and is therefore ſtill leſs known: but it is the province of the moſt importance to Spain, except perhaps Catalonia. It contains about 1000 or 1200 ſquare leagues, and they ſay, about one million and a half of inhabitants; but ſuppoſe it only one million, it is no bad population, and far beyond the reſt of Spain. As ſoldiers, I believe they are ſuperior to moſt of the other Spaniards at preſent,

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when their extreme frugality is not carried too far towards *ſtarvation*; for even ſome of their young people ſeem half ſtarved; ſo much that I ſhould doubt if even care and good living, or any thing, could make good and ſpirited ſoldiers of them. Contrary to the reſt of Spain, moſt of their little farms and poſſeſſions are too ſmall, and the poſſeſſors too poor to improve them: however, the mode of tenure, *los foros*, like our copyholds, is preferable, and it would be much better for Spain were it general throughout, eſpecially if they could exclude the inconvenience of ſub-tenants, too frequent here, as in Scotland and Ireland.

The reaſons gradually appear, why the produce of this province does not increaſe with the increaſe of money and demand. Above one-third of the lands belong to the church, and perhaps one-fifth of the produce of the reſt goes the ſame way in tithes and devotional donations. Two-thirds of the lands are entailed upon a few *mayoraſgos*, or belong to thoſe who are too poor to cultivate them with advantage;

vantage: now it is obvious, that few of theſe three claſſes will improve their lands, or beſtow any expence upon them above what is abſolutely neceſſary; their *aforados* certainly cannot, and ſtill leſs their ſubtenants; a very few only among the ſmaller *mayoraſgos*, who are obliged from poverty to live at home, and ſome creoles when they can find any land to buy, which is very ſeldom, can ever be expected to improve their eſtates: money, in other hands, can be of little ſervice to the country, as little or no land can come to market; and people will not riſk their capitals in any ſchemes of manufacture or great improvement under ſuch a government.

As to the taxes here, though this province has compounded with government for ſome of the moſt oppreſſive, the remainder are found to be very diſtreſſing; which is alſo aggravated by the rigorous and often arbitrary manner of levying all duties in this country, and by the habitual corruption and diſhoneſty of thoſe employed not only in that department, but indeed in almoſt every public employ-

ment: perhaps it muſt be ſo, where there is no ſyſtem of control from the repreſentatives of the people. But they are, nevertheleſs, quite embarraſſed in this province with numberleſs laws and regulations, and hence with eternal law-ſuits. We may here ſee how conceited and officious legiſlators, even with good intentions, may *regulate* away all the powers and deſires of men to improve: the people will only do it in their own way; when forced into any other, they will probably ſoon neglect it. Such ſeems to have been the progreſſive decay of induſtry in theſe countries.

The poor ragged *gallegos* are, however, rather induſtrious in their ignorant and coarſe way. They are frugal to a degree of miſery, and eſpecially the women; who likewiſe perform the hardeſt labour in the fields, as frequently as the men, or more ſo. They drive the cart, they plough, and carry the manure where it is to be had, often in their arms, ſpreading it with their hands inſtead of a dung-fork.

The

The civilization of almoſt every country might be meaſured by the reſpect ſhown and employment allotted the female part of ſociety. In ſavage life, the women are held in the moſt laborious and abject ſtate of bondage; and in the higheſt ſtate of civilization, they ſeem to govern the world: in the one, they labour and carry burdens for their tyrants the men; and in the other, they ſit ſtill and direct them as their humble ſlaves; and in that ſituation, are very apt, like all human beings, to indulge in pernicious delicacy and idleneſs, which lead, by degrees, to noxious vices and depravity: or rather, we men indulge them, and do all we can to ſpoil their natural, active, and uſeful diſpoſitions, and are the real authors of all that debility and corruption of manners for which they are ſo often blamed. But even in the moſt diſſolute ſtate of ſociety, women do not often break looſe entirely, nor go ſo far in vice as the men, but often ſerve as ſome reſtraint to keep them within bounds. A wiſe government would endeavour at ſome juſt medium between thoſe extremes: that medium

medium will be found to consist, I believe, in the most perfect equality that is practicable between the sexes, in the enjoyment of personal rights, eminence, education; and the approaches to that equality may serve as indications of perfection in society and government.

LETTER XII.

Chimneys.—Windows.—Trees.—Theft.—Religion.

TRIFLES often become of conſequence, according to circumſtances, and may ſerve, as well as more important things, to ſhew the character and ſtate of a nation. The want of chimneys in this country, which is mountainous, and ſometimes very cold, is not a little diſtreſſing to us in our family way of living; and thence you may gueſs how little they are advanced in the conveniencies or luxuries of life. We have been obliged to build a kind of a chimney in a corner, but it coſt us great trouble to get the workmen to comprehend and execute the work: many of the inhabitants come now on purpoſe to ſee it. In ſome of their towns, it is but of late that the boys and populace have left off breaking the glaſs windows whenever

ever any body ventured to uſe them: in other places, they have deſtroyed all the trees and ſtatues of the public walks. Hence we ſee how difficult it is to improve the ſavage man, or to entice him even into common decency and cleanlineſs. It has coſt a great deal of trouble and oppoſition from the people in Madrid, to admit the late improvements in the police and comforts of their town, and from their general averſion to cleanlineſs, to prevent their dirtying the ſtreets from wantonneſs and bad habits.

I believe that which contributes moſt to put us out of humour at times with theſe miſerable gallegos, is their pilfering ſo frequently every thing from our houſe and garden; and we can hardly find any body here who has our ſenſe of the meanneſs and turpitude of this thieviſh diſpoſition. Their neighbours, the Portugueſe, are ſtill greater thieves if poſſible. One would think the lower claſſes in theſe countries all accomplices, or that tacitly approving of theft, they were determined to keep one another in countenance. It

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is ſo common, that nobody ſeems very much aſhamed of it; — or of a gaol, which is ſcarcely conſidered a puniſhment. Though their priſons are ſhocking nauſeous dungeons, their own houſes and way of life are ſo little better, that they ſeem to live in them with as little ſhame and regret as at home. Such are the ſubjects of arbitrary governments. The uſual and moſt approved remedy here for recovering ſtolen goods is, by applying to the father confeſſor, who often ſucceeds, and brings them to you, on condition of no queſtions being aſked, and no farther diſcovery being made.

It is a bad wind that blows no good. We muſt take the good with the bad in all human inſtitutions, be thankful, and not condemn the whole becauſe a part is imperfect. It ſeems fortunate that, even in the worſt regulated ſocieties, there are ſtill ſome who have an influence on the minds of the worſt of the people. But when government permitted ſo much political influence to an excluſive religion, they

they gave themſelves a maſter with whom they could never afterwards contend. The ſacred ſeal of confeſſion was admirably contrived to complete the ſyſtem of church power and influence. I am often, on reflection, aſtoniſhed at the ſucceſs of the Proteſtant reformation, againſt ſuch an artful and well-eſtabliſhed power. It would have been impoſſible, if the Inquiſition had been then completely eſtabliſhed throughout Chriſtendom. Reaſon and philoſophy would probably always have been cold and feeble opponents to eccleſiaſtic authority. Nothing but its own arms could have been ſucceſsful againſt it. One enthuſiaſm may ſometimes be effectually oppoſed to another, but nothing elſe; and the new, while young and vigorous, will often beat the old and eſtabliſhed. Hence you may be ſure we have not yet done with religious revolution.

But this pretended remedy for theft, and other crimes, is plainly calculated to promote the power of Holy Church, and is very fit for the purpoſe.

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It operates as a palliative for preſent relief, and tends to encourage and maintain, more than to extirpate or diminiſh, the ſource of the evil, which will therefore long continue to bring griſt to the church mill.

LETTER XIII.

Reflections on Home, on Finance, &c.

IN almoſt any country, we may be as happy as our nature admits, if we are once determined to make the beſt of it: but in few countries it is poſſible to form this determination, and in fewer ſtill can we keep it. A longing deſire after *home* haunts us every where. The purſuit of ſome decided plan may produce exertions that employ and fill up the mind, as well in one place as another. But thoſe who, as you ſay, pretend to make no difference between places, and to be always equally happy in all, muſt either want feeling, taſte, or veracity; or they muſt have acquired a degree of ſtoical apathy which I do not underſtand. We now perceive that a great partiality and affection for every thing belonging to our native land ſeems to increaſe with time and diſtance,

diſtance, to a degree which you cannot at home feel or conceive. The ſight of every Engliſh face is a treat to us.

We are not always aware of the motives that influence or produce our actions and opinions. In ſuch a diſpoſition of mind, I am perhaps too often in the humour to curſe this dirty country, and to doubt whether any thing in it be worth writing to you about. I then recall my thoughts from home, look round, and find that the knowledge of error and ſuperſtition, the effects of tyranny, civil and religious, are of conſequence, though generally conſidered as common-place, and charitably overlooked by moſt travellers. You know my opinion, that more important leſſons are frequently to be drawn from the errors than from the knowledge of others.

So far from deſpiſing the natural verſatility of mind given to man, he ought rather to rejoice, that he is capable of ſuch eaſy tranſitions, from painful anxiety and vexation, to eaſe and tranquillity; that he can ſo ſoon be reconciled to his ſituation,

and forget his misfortunes; and that the wretch of to-day, may be happy to-morrow, without any change of outward circumstances. So soon as we have recovered that inestimable blessing, good humour, we see with different eyes; objects change their appearance and hue. I can then very well agree with your speculative friend, and admit that there must be something worth observing every where, and that even the poor nasty people who now surround us, may excite the attention of a philosopher. I am, however, so far recovered from the vexation of our late robberies, and some other ill usage, that I find myself again beginning to be amused with trifles. We are just going to St. Jago, the capital of the province and of their superstition, where we may contemplate the power of the church, the dissolute manners of her sons, or hear some of her good music.

But you wished for information concerning Spanish finance. You will find accounts of it already published, sufficiently correct

correct for your purpoſe; ſo that I ſhall only give you ſome general ideas and reflections.

Their whole ſyſtem then of taxation, or finance, is, in my opinion, a collection of abuſes founded on ignorance and oppreſſion; ſo much ſo, that all attempts to improve the country will be vain, till they have changed the whole plan and principles of their finance, as well as of their policy and religion. But their ignorance of the true principles of national revenue and proſperity leads me to think, that if they could be brought to change, it would be for the worſe. They have talked of that French chimera, the *droit unique*, which they might be romantic enough to adopt, find themſelves diſappointed, then return to their old methods of taxation, and never diſcover all the while that both were fallacious.

Their taxes, like many other of their cuſtoms and regulations, are either of Mooriſh origin, derived from the moſt oppreſſive feudal times, or built upon the

worſt of modern principles. You will find, that the chief part of the revenue ariſes, 1ſt, From the *milliones*, which is a tax on ſeveral ſorts of proviſions, and the neceſſaries of life: 2dly, From the *duana* or cuſtoms: 3dly, The *ſiete rentillas*: 4thly, From the ſalt: 5thly, From the bullion ariſing from the mines, when imported, and when exported: and 6thly, From the tobacco, the collection of which tax alone is ſaid to employ above 70,000 people. But the moſt oppreſſive, though far from the moſt productive, of all their taxes is, the *Alcavala*: which is an impoſt of from ten to fourteen *per cent.* on every ſale of almoſt every thing; ſo that five or ſix ſales double the price. By this they have baniſhed trade and manufactures from their country. They loſt the United Provinces by endeavouring to force this tax on them, after the meaſure of oppreſſion was full. They now know it to be quite ſufficient of itſelf to ruin the country, and keep down the commerce and induſtry of any nation; we may therefore ſuppoſe it is continued

for that purpoſe. The whole ordinary revenue is ſuppoſed to amount to about four millions ſterling, and I believe cannot be much increaſed; a circumſtance replete with many important and miſchievous conſequences.

What you formerly obſerved is à-propos to our ſubject, and ſhould not be loſt, viz. That the natural progreſſion of induſtry has not only, almoſt every where, been obſtructed by the careleſs rapacity of governments, but often by the very regulations officiouſly meant to promote it; one ſpecies of induſtry has been encouraged to the ruin of others more uſeful; every ſtep they took tended to curtail natural liberty without any equivalent advantage. Such have been moſt of the laws eſtabliſhing corporations and monopolies, and regulating apprenticeſhips; taxes on work, workmen, ſales, and returns, on exports and imports, &c. by which all the circulation has been led through a channel where it could not have the moſt advantageous effects, the revenue of the ſtate. By their fooliſh and ſelfiſh

ſyſtems of balance of trade, every nation has endeavoured to impoveriſh its neighbours, as if with a view to prevent their becoming happy and induſtrious, and thereby profitable cuſtomers: conſidering money as real riches, though only a very equivocal ſign of them, they are cutting down the tree to get at the fruit.

Moſt of theſe falſe principles and prejudices ſtill exiſt here in their *full vigour*; nay, many of them originated and ſpread from hence, when this was a leading nation in Europe; and their graſping, ſelfiſh plans of commerce and colonization have been but too much imitated by other nations.

After all, conſidering the expence attending modern governments, and the preſent ſtate of moſt countries, the beſt remedy is but a bad one, viz. a little more ſkill and artifice in laying and levying the taxes, which not only muſt ſtill exiſt, but are thence increaſed; and the freeſt and richeſt governments are thus tempted to go as much too far as the

pooreſt

pooreſt deſpot. The two grand objects to be attended to, are firſt to enrich the people, and then to lay the taxes equally: but, alas! how few men or miniſters are capable of either!

LETTER XIV.

Andaluſia.—Cadiz.—Trade to the Colonies.—Laws of Ports.

To Mr. T.

I MEAN now to give you a ſhort account of a long journey, from one extremity of Spain to the other; from Gibraltar, by way of Madrid, to Corunna, which you may find interrupted by occaſional reflections, as uſual. Your favourite province of Andaluſia may often prove the moſt intereſting part of a journey through Spain, both on account of the peculiar humour, dialect, wit, and urbanity, of its inhabitants, and (provided you have only Spaniſh ideas of riches and plenty) on account of the comparative affluence of the country. But to an Engliſhman, if we except the few rich plains on the Guadalquivir, and ſome other

other ſmaller rivers that run into it, the whole province has but a barren and naked appearance. Leaving the uſual tracts, we ſometimes croſſed wild and deſert hills, inhabited by ſhepherds who had nothing to offer us but *gaſpacho*, or bread and water ſeaſoned with a little pepper and oil. Throughout the greateſt part of the province, I could have fancied myſelf travelling between the far ſeparated Mooriſh villages, conſiſting of a few wretched huts, thinly ſcattered among the mountains.

In the corn lands, the incredibly large tracts belonging to every *cortijo*, or cottage, are badly cultivated, as may eaſily be imagined from their too great extent; and excepting in the two German colonies, the ſame appearance of rags and poverty is to be met with, that ſtrikes the traveller in the interior parts of Spain. The cultivation of oil ſeems to be profitable, as the appearance of their grounds, works, and mills, ſufficiently indicates.

Cadiz deſerves our firſt notice, both on account of its opulence and important ſituation. You may preſently perceive here

here a more liberal way of thinking, a character even of luxury and vice, different from the reſt of the nation: more cheerful manners, more confidence, credit, and ſociability, among men, who are not, as in other parts, kept aſunder by a melancholy and diſtruſtful poverty; ſoured by pride and oppreſſion, rendered diffident and indifferent about each other, and about almoſt every thing.

Wherever the people of different nations are well ſettled and mixed, I think the human ſpecies improves, and a race is produced ſuperior to either ſide of the original ſtock. Nature ſeems, by every means, to invite the people of different countries and climates to aſſociate, to aſſiſt and improve each other; a diſpoſition which their fooliſh and malignant governments are always endeavouring to control. The perſonal improvement of the people here, eſpecially of the middling and better ſort, I think is obvious, and has been progreſſive even within my memory.

This is now almoſt the only thriving place in Spain, and its trade is ſaid to have

increaſed

increaſed of late a million of dollars annually. But to me it is a matter of doubt, whether the riches of this town are advantageous to the nation. The trade to the colonies, which is entirely confined to this port, throws all the riches and luxury of the kingdom into one part, while the reſt is ſtarved. The country is equally drained of its inhabitants, by their flocking to the new world, to which their idleneſs and poverty have taught them to turn their hopes and attention, inſtead of minding their buſineſs, and endeavouring to acquire that eaſe and comfort at home, which they in vain ſeek in New Spain.

Some of theſe evils ſeem to have engaged the attention of government; and as a remedy, the commerce of this port is intended to be divided between thirteen more: but I doubt the remedy will be ineffectual, or produce other evils. The *wiſe ones* ſuppoſe that, by this diviſion, more money, and a greater portion of the freights and profits of their trade, will remain in the country: ſo much the worſe. The Spaniards attempt more buſi-

neſs

neſs than they have capital or hands to manage well; the nation has hitherto furniſhed little elſe to its own trade, than a place of rendezvous and depoſit for ſtrangers; yet, even from this there remains more money in the country than does it good. The abundance of money in Spain has had the moſt pernicious effects; as it has increaſed, every thing elſe has become dear and ſcarce, induſtry has diminiſhed, and manufactures have diſappeared; ſo that Monteſquieu's queſtions are now ſufficiently anſwered by experience, viz. "Whether "money, in too great abundance, will not "*always* have the effects it has had in "Spain?" And, "Whether the money "trade with its colonies can ever be bene-"ficial to that country?"

While this is the caſe, extending a ſyſtem in which the evils predominate, can hardly prove a remedy, but the contrary. Thoſe evils will be extended and increaſed, and may ſtill overpower the advantages. Various abuſes and frauds will multiply with the occaſions, with the increaſe of offices and of money, and with the drain of people.

I know

I know of no ſufficient remedy for this, excepting religious toleration, and the encouragement of ſtrangers; nor of any power that could repeople and reſtore their country, without a free and gradual admiſſion of foreigners; but then this would change their whole ſyſtem of government, religion, and commerce, which is too much to be expected or attempted at once. Unfortunately for them, even their learned and wiſe men ſtill retain much of the vulgar jealouſy of admitting ſtrangers to ſettle and grow rich in their country, which is juſt what they want moſt.

The Spaniards, or their creoles, are by no means bad maſters; on the contrary, they are perhaps too indulgent, ſo that their ſlaves and domeſtics become idle and indolent. The defect is not in the individuals, but in the conſtitution of their government, which is certainly not framed ſo as to reform itſelf: that can only be done by a very great prince, by a Lycurgus, a political hero, ſuch as modern times do not produce; one who could relinquiſh half his own power, and who ſhould know every thing.

It would almoſt require a miracle to open their eyes; and till that is done, there is but little hope of their opening their trade, or of their relinquiſhing their oppreſſive ſyſtems of duties and reſtraints, ſo as to make it profitable enough for individuals to ſupply each other acroſs the Atlantic with bulky goods and materials, which is almoſt the only kind of commerce beneficial to a country, leaving all the various trades and manufactories to find their own places, and to balance themſelves; and there is ſtill leſs hope of their opening their ports or colonies to foreigners, and of their entering into ſome competition with other nations, though the only way to awaken induſtry; nor is there much hope of their ſoon procuring or perceiving the right form of government, on which all this depends. We are ſorry to find that even Campomanes ſeems hardly ſenſible of theſe great leading principles of trade and national proſperity; and as to the reſt of the nation, they are yet diſputing whether the barbarous and monopolizing mode of excluſive companies be not the beſt way

of

of trading to their own colonies. You may conſider how far they are behind, and have yet to go.

But I am forgetting ſome other remarks I had to make on this place. The ſea will probably in time work its way through it, near the part where the new cathedral ſtands, unleſs they conſtruct better works for breaking the force of the waters, and ſlope the banks properly, like thoſe of the Dutch for ſuch purpoſes. And this cathedral will probably never be finiſhed, for another reaſon: the funds, or taxes, allotted for the work, are to continue till it ſhall be completed, which the managers will therefore find means always to poſtpone *.

The public is eaſily cheated in ſuch countries, and there is nobody to take its part here, except ſometimes the king: but even he has ſeldom power ſufficient to do it effectually. Any impoſition or abuſe, once eſtabliſhed on the firm baſis of the in-

* The *Duomo* at Milan has been building theſe thouſand years, and is not yet finiſhed, perhaps for the ſame reaſons.

tereſt

tereſt of any powerful body of men, becomes thence almoſt immovable.

In every ſea-port perhaps in the world, there are ſome cuſtomary mitigations of the duties payable to the ſtate. This, from bribery and connivance, is often gradually carried to extremes. Here, from the exorbitant and ill-judged impoſitions on merchandize, ordered by a government conſtitutionally ignorant and careleſs, all parties, by a kind of mutual conſent, had agreed in making this allowance very conſiderable; inſomuch that not above half the impoſed duties were probably levied, which was more for the advantage of the trade and of the crown, than if the whole had been taken. In no country was there ever a better underſtanding between the executive officers of government and the men of buſineſs: indeed, without it, buſineſs could not perhaps be carried on at all. A new and rigid adminiſtrator here, nevertheleſs, inſiſts on levying the whole of the duties as ordered by the ſtate. This is ſaid to be impoſſible: however, he goes on in the rigid execution of his impracticable

ticable project; and we had the mortification to see some of his bonfires of fine English goods, great quantities of which he has lately caused to be seized and burnt according to their laws, for not having paid all those impracticable impositions *. Indeed, the duties should now be lowered, for several reasons common to all trade, and for some peculiar to this country. In their new ports, trade will otherwise meet with insurmountable obstructions; and their subjects at home should, at least, be put on a footing with their colonists, who have been much favoured of late.

Men, when left to themselves, will often fall into methods or expedients best suited to their own situation: mitigating or evading bad laws by common consent, we frequently see practised in many other parts of the world; which, on the whole, is certainly better than a strict observance of them, let the lawyers say what they will. When a law is commonly evaded, it is a sign of its being a bad one; and such eva-

* It was, however, soon found necessary to remove this administrator.

ſion becoming general, indicates a defective legiſlature more ſtrongly perhaps than a corrupted people. The general dread and abhorrence of the laws, and of all who are concerned in their execution, ſo remarkable in this country, ſhew that ſomething muſt be amiſs. The people muſt have ſome reaſon to fear injuſtice, from the nature or adminiſtration of thoſe laws. We ſhould not be ſurpriſed to find their minds and opinions depraved and erroneous, when either to follow or to oppoſe their natural guides and criterion, church and ſtate, may equally lead them wrong.

LETTER XV.

Virtue, public and private.—Reformers.—Abuſes.—Myſteries.—Government.

To Mr. A. J.

Cadix.

THE general complaint, that the world degenerates, cannot always be juſt. Yet in the progreſs of civilization we may conceive it to decline in morals, as it improves in arts and ſciences. Public and private virtue ſeem now to be different, and do not neceſſarily exiſt together. A man, without loſing his good name, may commit acts to cheat government, the public, or the people, which were he to attempt on a friend would eternally diſgrace him. Theſe diſtinctions are very ſtriking here. We find many honourable and valuable private characters, but few of them in public employ; perhaps, when once in

office, they are either obliged to go with the tide, or in ſome degree are neceſſarily corrupted by the very nature of power. I think we have ſeldom found many of our friends, or even ourſelves, remain quite the ſame after preferment as before. When public virtue is not in faſhion, private integrity will hardly ſtem the tide of corruption. Moſt modern reformers are a kind of conceited and partial little *reformatori di ſtato*, who do more harm than good, like this Cadix adminiſtrator, whoſe ſmall part taken differently from the reſt, ſerves only more to diſconcert the whole; they generally diſtreſs rather than reform, and interrupt more than they forward: an interruption in one part of the public buſineſs may affect the whole.

It requires great wiſdom, as well as dexterity, to mend any of the wheels of ſociety. You cannot ſtop the machine, but muſt watch and follow its motions, ſo as to repair it by gentle means,—by general laws which may gradually and quietly execute themſelves. The young and precipitate

cipitate are apt to fancy every improvement practicable, even without watching proper occaſions, which occur but rarely. They fancy that truth, ſcience, and ſound principles, can do every thing, and muſt always prevail with mankind, without conſidering their character and the condition of ſociety. This is rather a reſpectable error. Bold and precipitate reformers are ſometimes neceſſary and ſucceſsful on certain great and difficult occaſions.

The roots of moſt eſtabliſhed abuſes lie deep. Lopping off branches is doing nothing, for others will ſpring from the ſame ſtem. Sometimes the whole ſtem muſt be rocted up, and another planted. But ſuch violent innovations are not to be effected in times of tranquillity, or they would coſt more than the value, in different kinds of deſtruction, in undeſerved ſufferings and derangements. Such a reform muſt begin at the head, the ſource of all government.

Countries ſo loaded with political evils as this, invite the mind to political ſpeculation. Here we can ſtudy bad government,

and trace the whole chain of its pernicious effects; no unprofitable ſtudy, if properly purſued and applied. We may ſee how one falſe principle produces innumerable evils not to be foreſeen by human wiſdom; how one abuſe opens the door to many others. They hang as neceſſarily together as a ſtring of lies; and an erroneous ſyſtem once eſtabliſhed ſeems immovable, as ſo many are intereſted in ſupporting its abuſes; and hence even the worſt ſyſtems of government find many advocates.

Arts and ſociety cannot advance with proper celerity, till myſtery is baniſhed from every art and ſubject. Knowledge muſt be ſimplified and laid open to public inveſtigation, when falſity and nonſenſe will be readily diſtinguiſhed from truth and ſcience, and gradually abandoned as uſeleſs. We may then work in open day, and depend on mutual aſſiſtance and forbearance, more than on any arts of deceiving each other. We muſt ſuppoſe men a little better than they are, in order to make them ſo. Treat them with confidence, and they will endeavour to deſerve it.

But I find I have been led on from one thing to another, to fill up my letter with ſpeculations, ſo that it may now ſeem tedious to exemplify my doctrine, as I intended, by the affairs and caſes here that ſuggeſted theſe reflections, and to which they apply. Bad governments are full of uſeful leſſons and inſtruction; but byſtanders principally ſee the game. The natives, happily perhaps for them, diſcover little of it, and ſeldom perceive the extent of their own depreſſion, or the depth of their fall.

The art or ſcience of legiſlation has made but little progreſs in thoſe countries where the Roman laws have been adopted. That which is borrowed is not probably ſo proper for us, or ſo capable of improvement, as that which grows up indigenous in the country. Better make new, or mend the old, than borrow what does not fit us, unleſs we firſt cut it ſo as to make it fit. There is hardly a legiſlature now in the world that deſerves the title, except our own; nor any other that is forced to

attend to the intereſts of all ranks and claſſes of people.

The practice of the law is almoſt every where elſe defective or tyrannical, either under or over the mark. You know their ſecret and unfair modes of examination, and that here every judge ſeems a ſevere and inexorable tyrant, rather than a tender, humane, and benevolent friend to mercy, and to the priſoners, which he appears to be in our courts of law; and yet I believe our courts diſpatch more buſineſs, and do more rigid juſtice.

I might, perhaps, tell you more of their laws, but muſt confeſs my inability and want of time for that, and ſeveral other points that I could wiſh to attend to: each would require a particular ſtudy and inquiry, and life is too ſhort for them all. The chief laws are, 1. *Los del fuero juſgo*, compiled in the times of their Gothic kings, from old uſages, and partly from the Theodoſian code, orders of kings and councils, &c. 2. *Laſde ſiete partidas*, collected by Frederick III. and publiſhed

by

by his ſon Alphonſo X. the aſtronomer. 3. *Las leyes de Tozo*, on criminal matters, mayoraſgos, &c. The popes have taken advantage of their confuſion, as uſual, to extend the papal juriſdiction: though there appears, of late, ſome diſpoſition in government to reſtrain their power. I believe you will not find theſe, nor many other laws, to be much better for being old: nor do many of their more modern edicts and pragmatics ſhow any great progreſs of improvement in legiſlation: but I know not enough of the ſubject to be particular, or decided.

Nations in general are too much bound by antiquity, and attached to old cuſtoms, to improve rapidly. There muſt, doubtleſs, be fixed principles in every conſtitution of government that deſerves the name: but theſe principles, once diſcovered, ſhould be progreſſive, and not ſtationary. Fixed laws ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from temporary regulations, and gradually aſcend towards perfection, by ſteps built upon different and comparative experiments, adapted to the natural progreſs of mankind in every

every thing elſe. Yet when we venture on conſiderable changes, how few of them prove to be remedies! This ariſes chiefly from want of the above diſtinctions, and from ſuch changes being introduced by force, and not originating from thoſe who are moſt concerned in the event; being principally made by ignorant and indolent deſpotiſm, which can never produce good laws, ſuch as execute themſelves, from being the real voice and intereſt of a large majority of all concerned. Human wiſdom is unequal to ſudden and violent changes in laws and government, which are rarely attempted but in deſpotic countries, where wiſdom is leaſt to be expected. The neceſſity of every great reform muſt be obvious, and long wiſhed for, before it be undertaken, and then it ſhould only be effected by gradation, which makes every thing eaſy, except in new countries; and there may be caſes that require a ſudden as well as a total reformation.

Few have a right to conſider this as common-place. What is known is far from being ſufficiently diffuſed, and what remains

remains to be diſcovered, is conſiderable and eſſential. As you may be a ſenator as well as a ſoldier, the two firſt characters in the ſtate, and which, I think, ſhould be oftener united, I wiſh you to be a civilian by times, and to take the moſt enlarged views of mankind. Your ſtudies, and your travels, ſhould chiefly be directed to thoſe great objects, and you ought to learn to neglect, without deſpiſing, the trifles that employ the majority of the rich, and even of the learned.

LETTER XVI.

General Knowledge.—Univerſities.—Arts.—Travel.—Military.

MY LORD,

A PERSON of your ſon's fortune and genius, I acknowledge, might and ought to attempt a general acquaintance with moſt ſubjects, in preference to a more profound inveſtigation of a few only. But for that purpoſe he muſt be left a good deal to his own courſe, without much of the reſtraint of ſchool methods or diſcipline. His quickneſs and ſenſibility are good ſymptoms, and may carry him farther than all the powers of mere application ever could go. You will ſee him much ſooner aſcend the tree of knowledge by direct ways of his own, than others by all their crooked artificial paths and analytic ladders. Such minds require only to be followed, and occaſionally directed, and are not to be blindly led

led through the common modes of modern minutiæ. Though we ſhould always beware of parental partiality, and of miſtaking the idleneſs and vivacity of youth for real genius and abilities; I think, in this caſe, we are in no great danger of ſuch a miſtake. I wiſh you might find ſome eaſier and more direct methods of educating our youth, than thoſe uſually practiſed even in our higheſt ſchools: ſome other method is much wanted to fix the objects, and guide the rapid progreſs of genius towards more active and important parts in life.

Thoſe monkiſh inſtitutions called univerſities, are growing too old and unfit for the preſent times, and ſhould perhaps be laid aſide for ſomething new and more practical, on ſome ſuch plan as that propoſed by Milton, &c. the very novelty of which might awaken ſome freſh zeal and exertion. After all the attempts of theſe old fraternities to follow the improvements of the age, from the nature of their conſtitution I fear they will generally be too ſlow and too late; and we may doubt if on ſuch old foundations there can be erected any inſtitution,

ſtitution, any mode or ſyſtem of education, that will keep pace with the wants and progreſs of ſociety: though the endeavours which, we hear, are now employed for that purpoſe are certainly commendable, and may be attended with ſome temporary ſucceſs: ſuch ſucceſs is, however, generally perſonal, and often dies with the reformers. You ſee the merits of Leyden ſeemed to terminate with Boerhaave, and even thoſe of Edinburgh may gradually diſappear, if fortune ſhould fail to ſupply ſucceſſors worthy of their preſent excellent teachers. I have often wondered there are not more attempts among us to erect ſome new ſeminaries for general and uſeful knowledge, which might create emulation between the old and new.—Is there any hope from that at Warrington?

In this country we are forcibly ſtruck with the neceſſary connection of the arts, on ſeeing the lame progreſs of ſome on account of the want of others. I cannot therefore ſo readily agree with you in ſuppoſing, that the uſeful arts and trades ſhould, or can be ſucceſsfully cultivated in any nation,

nation, without the ornamental or fine arts; and am ſorry that ſuch opinions are yet ſo common among us. Be aſſured, the arts are all neceſſary to each other, and all muſt be carried on at the ſame time: though we are yet behind-hand in ſome of them, I think we are getting into the right way to ſucceed in all; and as we advance, we ſhall gradually perceive the neceſſary connection of the whole. That any of them are incompatible with others, I conſider as a mere ſpeculative prejudice. Though that elevation of mind, ſo neceſſary in ſome of the liberal arts and walks of life, may not ſeem to unite well with the mercenary ſpirit of commerce; yet we ſee that a people muſt firſt be at their eaſe before they can attend to pleaſure, or its various ſources in nature, art, or fancy. Riches, gradually acquired in a ſtate of freedom and exertion by trade, will naturally promote agriculture, letters, arts, and ſcience, whenever government has wiſdom enough only to ſuffer it. Society then would cure itſelf of many follies, and much ignorance; the different ranks and claſſes of men would be brought

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nearer together, inſtead of being ſet aſunder; the upper ranks would be cured of certain remains of feudal pride and nonſenſe, and the lower, of a certain mean and deceitful ſpirit of traffic and gain, which debaſes, as it engroſſes, the ſoul; and all the arts would advance abreaſt. A ſpirit of trade and induſtry ſhould doubtleſs be encouraged, or rather left to encourage and produce itſelf; that ſpirit is then capable of being gradually improved into enlarged and liberal ſentiment, and may in time come to be nearly allied to arts, arms, ſcience, and good taſte: our nation ſhews ſufficiently the poſſibility of that progreſs.

Though the Engliſh, in my opinion, are now before the reſt of the world in moſt of the arts of importance, there are ſtill ſome branches left behind the reſt, and even the moſt advanced muſt feel the want of their companions. I am highly pleaſed to ſee your ſon has ſo thoroughly imbibed both the muſical and military ſpirit, and is ſo well diſpoſed and in the way to acquire thoſe accompliſhments; but not *à l'Angloiſe*, I hope, as yet; for theſe are juſt the arts in

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which our nation is, I fear, the moſt deficient, and without being ſufficiently ſenſible of the defect.

Though we could perhaps produce a little army, ſuperior, on the whole, to any other of equal numbers, as our men are excellent when they can be properly diſciplined; yet I believe Germany is now the ſuperior ſchool for officers, as Italy is for muſic: and all the arts are ſo naturally connected, eſpecially when well advanced, that even muſic is probably a neceſſary link of the chain. Though our iſland may not, as formerly, for ſome time produce many generals and artiſts of the very firſt claſs, we are in a fair way to be made ſenſible of what we want, which is, you know, the firſt ſtep towards amendment. But in thoſe walks we cannot thoroughly ſucceed, if confined to our own iſland, where the mind will be limited to certain tracts and nationalities, even in her greateſt progreſs; and to ſet her free, we muſt croſs ſeas and continents, and live and act a part in other countries.

Let us hope then that our active Engliſh ſpirit, and paſſion for travel, will continue and increaſe among us, as well for the ſupport of the character and the arts we already ſo eminently poſſeſs, as for the improvement of thoſe in which we are deficient: in that caſe, our natural ardour and perſeverance will gradually ſurmount every difficulty, and we may become the firſt people of the world in every human acquirement, as well as in political importance: but if we were to ſhut ourſelves up at home, and from pride, parſimony, or any other falſe principle, relinquiſh, like the Spaniards, the intercourſe and connection with rival powers, we ſhould ſoon become a ſubordinate nation, and our genius and induſtry would die away as they have done here.

Nor can I ſee by all your arguments, drawn from ſituation or conſtitution, why we may not become alſo a very military nation. The nation has, at different times, been very much ſo, and was, I believe, always the better for it. The taking the part that naturally belongs to us in the continental

tinental wars and alliances of the world, has commonly had the beſt effects upon us; giving a military turn to the people, and to our gentlemen, which all together made advantageous additions to the Engliſh character, and produced advances in arts and in arms, with a certain urbanity and civilization, which our government and ſituation, though both excellent, do not, perhaps, of themſelves beſtow. Men and nations muſt mix and contend with each other. Our former wars with France probably contributed to form a Black Prince, and many other gallant officers commanding troops and archers the beſt in Europe. King William, being great both as a ſoldier and a politician, by his continental wars and connections produced great and accompliſhed ſtateſmen, generals, writers; hence our Marlboroughs, Somers's, Priors, Swifts, &c. The military character was always of great importance to us, and ſeems now to be becoming highly neceſſary again: our political place in Europe may ſoon be ſuch as to make it abſolutely neceſſary for us all to learn to fight: the number and ſituation of

our enemies may make a conſtant guard, and general diſcipline, as neceſſary to us as to any other more military nation; and we are conſtantly ſubject to this danger, from the intrigues of our enemies. The internal vigour and defence of each nation, the peace and ſafety of the whole together, will conſtantly depend much on all being well and almoſt equally prepared for war.

I could wiſh it were again a faſhionable part of education for moſt of our young gentlemen to ſerve a few years, and ſhould be glad to ſee a little of our ancient military enthuſiaſm revived. To neglect, diſcourage, and cry down, the military ſpirit, as is uſual with us in time of peace, is a moſt dangerous doctrine. If country gentlemen are weak enough to be jealous of their defenders, why do they not learn to defend themſelves? It is when a ſmall and ſeparate part only of a nation is military, that the nation is in a real ſtate of danger and debility; and our ſafety would every way conſiſt in military knowledge and practice being general and common among us. Our dread of giving arms and diſcipline to the people,

people, proceeds from our ignorance and want of experience in theſe matters.

There are certain peaceful doctrines preached up by learned, benevolent, and bookiſh men, which miniſters, in particular, ſhould beware of adopting, as they are unfit for this world. If they have ever been the cauſe of neglect or loſs of military diſcipline, they have ſo far contributed to the ruin of nations; for ſuch neglect has generally preceded, haſtened, or completed, their downfal. Long peace and ſecurity have always had the worſt effects on the human character, producing a progreſſion of indolence, luxury, effeminacy, weakneſs, and national ruin. Thoſe doctrines become really dangerous when they pretend to teach us to avoid the temptations to war, by laying aſide the preparations for it. To fancy that the world can exiſt in perpetual peace, implies ignorance of the nature of man. The natural pride and injuſtice of all nations, or ſeparate bodies of men, towards each other, muſt ever produce wars: they are, perhaps, as neceſſary in the political or moral world, as ſtorms or thunder

are in the natural. Perpetual peace might be as hurtful to us as perpetual fair weather: ſo that thoſe ſpeculative philoſophers might be more beneficially employed in learning their military exerciſes; or theſe occupations ſhould perhaps be mixed ſo as to relieve each other, the active with the ſedentary, arms with letters. A life of entire ſtudy is not fit for human beings; let them preach peace and benevolence to all, and then prepare for war, and learn the uſe of arms: ſome of the beſt of men have done ſo.

When we can get government to adopt ſuch principles and promote ſuch practice, and ſhall find our young men of faſhion looking abroad for every occaſion to ſee ſervice, deſirous to join or imitate ſuch men as a Clinton or a Carleton (who are juſt gone with General Lloyd to join Romanzoff), in order to ſee the wars and manners of Turks, Ruſſians, Tartars, Algerines, &c.; and to examine the Pruſſian and Auſtrian armies, the ſcientific principles of fortification and artillery, wherever theſe may be found in practice, as in the moun-

tains of Piedmont or of Sileſia, on the Rhine or in the plains of Flanders, or the Dutch frontiers; I ſhall then have hopes of the revival of our military ſpirit. On the return of ſuch young men, it may ſoon be perceived whether they underſtand what they have ſeen, and have imbibed the military ſpirit: they will bring home books and plans, and will continue attentive to every minute part of their duty, to the military ſciences, and to whatever is going on among our engineers and artillery at Woolwich, or elſewhere; and you may then be pretty ſure they are worth your acquaintance.

Doubtleſs, either of the extremes, too much military madneſs, or a total neglect of all diſcipline and defence, has each its bad conſequences; yet you will readily perceive that the ſafeſt and wiſeſt would be that of war and diſcipline, eſpecially when kept within bounds by the moderation and wiſdom of a ſteady and ſcientific government.

The tendency or diſpoſition towards war or peace, may depend much on the form of

government, which thereby acquires almoſt its greateſt importance. If there be any form that pretends to exclude, and make no proviſion for war, or any other that may lead conſtantly towards it, we may venture to pronounce them both unfit for men. There have been feudal and other ſyſtems, that ſeemed to make war their only object; and Quaker ſyſtems that pretended to exiſt in eternal peace: but of both we have ſeen the precarious and ſhort duration.

LETTER XVII.

Theory with Practice.—Public Diverſions.—Women.—Theatre.—Letters.—Learning.

Cadiz.

WE ought to ſtudy and know much, as you juſtly obſerve, before we travel, and ſhould be not only deſirous, but qualified to converſe with all who are eminent, to catch their ideas, and profit by every thing we ſee. But the taſk of being ſo qualified ſeems infinite, and life too ſhort for half the courſe in the uſual way, unleſs we determine to daſh acroſs the country of ſcience, by ſome ſhort paths, directly at the great objects and principles of uſeful knowledge; like a Frederic, who ſees and ſeizes at once the eſſentials on every ſubject, and whoſe ſecond thoughts are thoſe of a maſter and inventor.

As arts and ſociety advance, an extenſive and thorough knowledge of the world, joined to that of books and learning, becomes

comes gradually more difficult. Either of thoſe requires our whole attention: nay, each muſt again be ſubdivided, and every part become the only purſuit of entire bodies of men. Hence the neceſſary connection of the whole muſt be leſſened or loſt. Inſtead of approaching, theory and practice will recede from, each other. However difficult it may be to join the ſtudious with the active life, yet they muſt be joined in every great character. If knowledge and activity continue to exclude each other; if the ſtudy of books, and the ſpirit of induſtry, become incompatible, the moral and political ſciences, which require the moſt active and the greateſt intellectual abilities, the moſt extenſive theory with practice, and ſtudy with experience, may gradually receive leſs of thoſe aſſiſtances of which they ſtand the moſt in need: and the great maſter-ſcience of government may yet long fall to the ſhare of partial proficients, and feel the want of thoſe men of univerſal minds, who were anciently more common, more practical and enterpriſing.

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Though ſcience or theory is far before blind practice and routine in dignity and importance, yet I fear we are not to look for much knowledge fit for immediate uſe from the cloſet ſpeculations of the moſt ſtudious and learned: and, ſingular as it may appear, they who are the beſt or moſt informed, ſeem to go often the fartheſt wrong. But there may not be occaſion for more precautions againſt their ſpeculations. We do not find that men of buſineſs, or of the world, miniſters or monarchs, are much inclined to mind what is ſaid by your Rouſſeaus, Mirabeaus, Helvetiuſes, and many others; yet their ideas may be of uſe at ſome future period.

However qualified you may chance to be, I muſt inſiſt, that all of you who can, ſhould travel, eſpecially men in your high and important ſtation, as you owe your beſt efforts to the public. Artiſts, magiſtrates, military men, all ſhould travel, and take more enlarged views of nature and of art, of men and things, than one iſland can afford.

The public and private diverſions and amuſements of every country ſhould be attended

tended to by travellers. They may generally ſerve to ſhew the national taſte and diſpoſition, which will then often appear without reſerve. I ſhall not trouble you with particulars about the Spaniſh bull-feaſts, as they have been ſo often deſcribed, though they might furniſh ſome obſervations on the national taſte; on the habits and diſtinctions of cruelty and courage. I fear it is becoming the faſhion to cry down theſe manly diverſions as barbarous; I find they are not now purſued with the ſame ſpirit as formerly, and gentlemen take ſeldom, of late, a part in fighting the bull, but leave it to the hired gladiators, who are generally butchers by profeſſion.

Nor ſhould we overlook the women of any country. Some of them are found to be like beings of ſuperior intelligence; and even with the moſt ordinary, we may learn anecdotes, characters, or ſecrets, of ſome importance, ſuch as may lead to what you want, and to greater things than may at firſt appear. In this country, we are agreeably ſurpriſed to meet with ſo much lively wit, grace, and ſentiment, in the ſex,

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where there is ſo little reaſon to expect any thing of the kind, amidſt ſo much ſuperſtition and ignorance. Their talents and diſpoſition for muſic, their pretty little ſongs, and, ſtill more, their arch and faſcinating manner of ſinging them, come very à-propos to crown the whole of their power and influence. Though they are not free from the baneful contagion of the national ſuperſtition, yet the native graces, more than the beauty of the ſex here, may be ſaid to be too powerful for the devil himſelf; for in ſpite of a conſtant and well-cultivated dread of him, and all that their ghoſtly and ignorant fathers can ſay, they are perhaps the gayeſt, the moſt lively and agreeable women in Europe. Though their timid devotion carries them ſo often to church, yet even there, the arch vivacity of their diſpoſition appears; and under the gloom of their black veils and melancholy demeanour, there paſſes, between the ſexes, much of that ſilent converſation in which they are ſo great adepts.

The Spaniſh theatre is ſtill, perhaps, nearly the ſame as in the time of Lopez de Vega.

Vega. The living hiſtory of former times is here to be ſeen in various things. On their ſtage, only intrigue, vice, roguery, low buffoonery, cruelty, and the marvellous, can pleaſe them: the pieces are generally both written and ſpoken in a moſt unnatural ſtalking ſtyle of cold and pompous declamation; their action on the ſtage, ſo cold and ſtiff, though in common life and converſation ſo natural, lively, and expreſſive. As I think French tragedy, or declamation, is all one kind of lamentable burſting expreſſion of bodily pain; ſo that of the old actors here is all a kind of monotonous proud ſtyle of whining or petulant reaſoning; and their frequent long ſpeeches, and cold ſoliloquies, become very tireſome indeed. Nothing ſentimental or pathetic; much high-flown figure and bombaſt; endleſs ſtrings of metaphors; much incident and intrigue, but little or nothing natural. Yet the beautiful flowery language of Lopez is charming. They have lately attempted ſome tranſlated pieces, and ſome tolerable imitations of the paſſions, for the firſt time perhaps ſince Cervantes.

vantes. I have juſt ſeen one of them acted, our Gameſter. I obſerved, that the audience generally laughed in ridicule at the places where I wept; at the moſt pathetic parts; for it was tolerably acted by ſome of Olavide's diſciples: but now that he is gone—to the Inquiſition, and his theatrical ſchool is no more, their native barbariſm will probably again prevail. They ſtand much in need of ſuch men, and he was introducing good taſte, and a reliſh for truth and nature, among them, with more ſucceſs than I ſhould have expected. However, the hiſtory of their ſtage, and of their poetry, with all their defects, *acueſtas*, would probably be the moſt intereſting part of an account of their literature *.

I wiſh the Spaniards and Italians would apply more to this art of acting and elocution. They would outdo all other na-

* I find a very agreeable account of their poetry is ſince publiſhed by Mr. Dillon, who gave us Bowles's Natural Hiſtory of Spain, &c. This account of their poets, and ſtill more of their poetry, I ſhould think, might be conſiderably enlarged in another edition. You may likewiſe ſee ſome account of theſe in Linguet, and of their artiſts, in Cumberland, Twiſs, &c.

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tions, by the advantages of countenance, of habitual expreſſion, manner, and animation.

You know the Spaniards have had their golden period of learning, and of ſome approaches to good taſte, always with much of the fire of genius. It roſe with the latter of their native monarchs ſoon after the revival of arts and letters in Italy, declined with the power of their Auſtrian princes, and fell with the loſs of their connection and intercourſe with Italy, Flanders, and the other European nations. Cervantes tried to ſtop the progreſs of bad taſte, but not with the ſucceſs he merited. Falſe principles and bad habits had already taken too deep root. He probably contributed much towards completely baniſhing the romantic and rather reſpectable ſpirit of chivalry, which was already more than ſufficiently on the decline; but he could not ſtop the natural progreſs and growing love of ornament and affectation. Thence we may trace their taſte for bombaſt and the marvellous, the redundancy of figure and exaggeration, in writing; a taſte

which

which has reigned ever ſince, with very few exceptions. The decline once begun, was probably haſtened by the too fertile fancy, and defective delicacy and judgment, of Lopez and others, and it ſeems to have been foſtered and revived, as if congenial to the fiery and extravagant taſte of the nation.

In moral ſubjects, in wiſdom, in the knowledge of men and of human nature, they, for a time, were the firſt, and led the way. In ſound philoſophy and uſeful ſcience, they have generally been deficient. Their deep ſcholaſtic ſtudies, their inveſtigations of antiquity, their few, though ſuperior, labours in the fine arts, have never been ſufficiently connected with ſociety, nor profitable to the community.

LETTER XVIII.

Wit. — Manners. — Character. — Taſte. — Language. — Authors.

Cadiz.

THE Spaniards in general, and the Andaluſians in particular, with imaginations ſo warm and fertile, have a powerful taſte and diſpoſition for wit, and many of both ſexes are great adepts in that way: with the moſt compoſed and ſteady countenance they will long keep the table in a roar, and are infinitely amuſing: but as is uſual with warm and impetuous fancy, there is often a want of delicacy, of ſound taſte and judgment: they attempt and reliſh all ſpecies of wit, and often prefer the lower and coarſer kinds: but let us beware of becoming too difficult to pleaſe, which we Engliſh, I believe, often are; we may refine too much, and muſt loſe by being too nice and ſqueamiſh. A good ſtrong appetite will digeſt all natural food; and

and genuine wit, when not too loathſome with indecency, flattery, or ſoured with ſeverity, ought always to pleaſe. Though greatly changed and Frenchified ſince their Bourbon connections, they have not yet loſt all thoſe enthuſiaſtic and romantic notions which once diſtinguiſhed and raiſed them, however ridiculouſly, above other mortals. In every rank we yet find ſome of thoſe old and dignified characters, with a certain elevation of ſoul, and many lofty ideas, though accompanied with what our modern delicacy may conſider as a ridiculous pride.

Though politically they are now of ſmall conſideration, except in their own ideas, and but little of their former national greatneſs or character may remain, beſides their pride, yet individually the country ſtill abounds in valuable characters, or rather in materials of which ſuch characters may be readily formed when wanted. We meet with as excellent and amiable qualities of mind as in the moſt poliſhed and enlightened nations: this is often, I believe, the caſe in rude and miſ-

governed countries; virtues arise as they are wanted, where the ſoil and materials are good, and here they are excellent. Wiſe Nature ſeems ſolicitous in bringing every condition of ſociety nearly to a level of happineſs. If you live any time among them, you will meet with ſouls capable of every virtue, but may obſerve how few occaſions or motives there are to practiſe any, in this ſtate of ſociety and government. They are obviouſly made for generoſity, probity, magnanimity, reſolution, perſeverance, and ſtill retain a certain cool and habitual equanimity of temper and ſound judgment, which we find in no other nation, joined to ſuch warmth of heart and fancy. But, even on this foundation, you will too often find a ſtructure of vice and ignorance; eſpecially in the lower claſſes, degrees of indolence, idleneſs, malevolence, depravity of taſte and diſpoſition, which exhibit at once to view the powers of habit and of a bad government, and the dregs or ruins of a moſt reſpectable national character. The Spaniards, though naturally deep and artful politicians, have

ſtill ſomething ſo nobly frank and honeſt in their diſpoſition, that they are not, I think, in proportion, politically inſidious or treacherous, unleſs the French make them ſo. Of the modern national characters, I am inclined to place the Spaniſh and Engliſh, ſo nearly alike, among the firſt. I believe there is likewiſe ſomething rather ſuperior ſtill perceptible in the modern Roman character, as well as in their language and manner; and alſo in the Mahinotes, or modern Lacedæmonians, and in the Macedonians.

The manners of the politer ſocieties here, and of the higher ranks, are already too cloſely copied from the French, who, you know, are not naturally delicate nor ſentimental, but artificially refined by faſhion. By means of the ladies in Spain, who readily adopt the liberty of French manners, which, engrafted on their own, they carry beyond the original, this nation will gradually be Frenchified, in ſpite of all the old Dons and old antipathies. The women being, of late, admitted to more freedom and ſociety, and at a period of

looſe manners, retaining all their old habits of art and intrigue, the freedom of intercourſe between the ſexes will probably be carried farther here than in the more poliſhed countries, whoſe vices they have acquired, without paſſing through the ſame *media* or degrees of civilization and arts of luxury. Vice, in various ſhapes, ſeems already here to ſtalk forth almoſt naked and alone, unreſtrained by habits and refinements, which elſewhere grow up with it. All leads to a coarſe and unadorned kind of materialiſm in pleaſure, to degrees of depravity and ſatiety, in which they will overtake their more refined neighbours, who began the ſame career ſo long before them. However, the fair ſex, as uſual, are ſtill far more refined and ſentimental than the men, and as they are gaining more influence in ſociety, may retard or regulate the progreſs of depravity. Every ſtranger who ſtays long enough to underſtand them, is captivated with the ſpirit, grace, and humour, of their converſation. You know ſomething of the romantic force of their paſſions, their ſtrong and inviolable at-

tachments, eſpecially when heightened by the difficulties of intrigue. Though the jealouſy of huſbands ſeems now worn out of faſhion, the ſpirit of it is preſerved among the lovers, and love is ſtill an object of the firſt importance in Spain. Their numerous love-ſongs have ſtill many graces, and though tinged with the hyperbolical falſe taſte of the times, are often highly expreſſive, refined, and laconic.

There are, as elſewhere, more vices in their ſea-ports and capital towns, than in the reſt of the country where their ancient character and diſtinguiſhing manners have not yet entirely diſappeared; and we Engliſh are generally pleaſed and proud to cheriſh and to reliſh ſuch remains, in oppoſition to the French; while they, with a ſneer of contempt, deſpiſe both the Spaniards and us for our bad taſte in not preferring every thing that is French; in their idea, *nous ne ſommes que des barbares tous les deux.*

Theſe two nations are, to be ſure, as oppoſite in almoſt every thing as nature could well make ſuch near neighbours.

Even the actual ſtate and taſte of female beauty is widely different in the two countries. After obſerving the prevalent ſtyle of beauty in France, we can readily conceive, that *Monſieur* cannot much admire that of this nation; nor reliſh or comprehend all the numerous Spaniſh graces of perſon, manner, language, nor the high expreſſions of phyſiognomy, ſo different from, and I think far ſuperior to, thoſe of his own nation. Among the fine faces here, conſiſting of features generally large and ſtrongly expreſſive, he finds nothing like the little round or rather ſquare face, with the ſnub noſe and pigeon's eye, which is the ſtyle of beauty the moſt common and the moſt eſteemed in France.

Where we find ſuch fine abilities and natural good ſenſe, joined to ſo much ignorance and falſe taſte, ſuch looſe manners and unreſtrained vices, with great inquiſitorial ſeverity in religious obſervances, it is plain, that the church, their only ſchool, aims not at the improvement of morals or of learning, but at power: nay, I think the moſt ſuperſtitious nations are the moſt

wicked

wicked and debauched, and we may almoſt meaſure their degrees of vice by the apparent ardour of their devotion. There is, perhaps, more probity, though leſs appearance of religion, in London, than in any other great town in Europe.

The Spaniſh, like the Italian, was among the firſt improved of the modern languages, and has long remained nearly in its preſent ſtate: ſonorous, majeſtic, now hyperbolically expreſſive, yet full of natural beauties and graces, and capable of many more; ſuſceptible of almoſt every ſtyle or modulation, but more particularly of the flowing, *altiſonante y grandioſo*, as Don Quixote ſays, and even of the ſublime; but not having been lately employed by good taſte and ſimplicity, neither in many works of modern delicacy, nor with ſufficient freedom in ſubjects of real intereſt and importance, it has not kept pace with ſome of its neighbouring languages, and ſtill retains the habits of its old romantic or leſs ancient bombaſt, even in the proſe writers: though there are late eſſays, as the *Penſador*, *P. Iſla*, &c. which have ſome claim

to

to more natural graces, and ſerve to ſhew the various powers of the language. But it is ſpoken with more purity, with more dignity and politeneſs, even by the peaſantry, and with leſs variation, through a greater extent of country, than almoſt any other language in Europe; viz. throughout the two Caſtiles, Leon, Eſtremadura, La Mancha, Granada, Murcia; and in Andaluſia, though not admitted as pure or claſſical, it is ſpoken with a peculiar grace, ſpirit, and ſalt; which laſt is the expreſſion here as well as in Attica. From Burgos to Malaga, you will not probably meet with a grammatical error in the converſation of any rank or individual; nor a vulgariſm, which indeed is a diſtinction almoſt unknown in this nation. You cannot often here, as with us and elſewhere, diſtinguiſh ranks and claſſes of men by the ſtyle of their language: all ſpeak correct and elegantly. With all their rags and poverty, yet there are no vulgar, no diſguſting blackguards nor ballad-ſingers: even the abuſe, and the ſongs, of the meaneſt and moſt ignorant, have generally wit or poetry,

good

good language, or taſte enough to render them remarkable, or raiſe them above vulgarity; and you will often find the ſongs of your muleteer ingenious, amuſing, and agreeable.

To attempt any tolerable account of their numerous writers, would lead us too far; and I have already, I believe, told you where to find information concerning many of them. Cervantes has produced but few ſucceſsful imitators, though they have ſince had poets of great wit and humour; of theſe, you will have collections publiſhed. P. Iſla's tedious novel of a friar, is far inferior to Don Quixote, and not intereſting; though he gives ſome good pictures of low life. But when he aſſumes the philoſopher, and talks of Newton, &c. he is poor indeed.

P. Feijoo, whom they celebrate ſo highly, I think ſcarcely equal to our middling writers of the laſt century. He ſeldom gets beyond the preſent tedious and affected manner of his nation, and makes, at beſt, but a ſuperſtitious philoſopher. Yet he muſt have ſome merit, as he is ſo generally read

read and eſteemed by his countrymen, who muſt be the beſt judges of his ſtyle.

Political writers, ſuch as Campomanes, with the tranſlators and importers of foreign ideas and improvements, might be conſidered as the moſt uſeful authors here, if any authors can be of uſe in ſuch a country, while under ſuch a government. It is difficult to find out, and ſtill more ſo to apply, means ſufficient to open the eyes of thoſe determined to keep them ſhut, or to diſcover the remedies that ſhould reach the vital ſources where their diſorders originate. Changes and improvements are not more, but often leſs, practicable for being neceſſary; and truth becomes leſs perceptible, and leſs attainable by its greater diſtance.

The moſt abſolute and determined monarch could not probably do much in this nation towards reforming the preſent race, ſo far gone in indolence, ignorance, poverty, and ſuperſtition: he could only prepare for the improvement of ſucceeding generations by wiſe laws, which might gradually produce a better conſtitution of government, and a different race of people.

I ſhould

I ſhould be for his beginning with ſuch laws as might facilitate the alienation of eſtates and the introduction of religious toleration. But the power of deſpotiſm itſelf is limited by popular prejudice and ancient cuſtom: hence the conſtant endeavours of the moſt ſagacious tyrants to level all ſuch barriers, to baniſh laws and rules, and to bring all into a ſtate of confuſion, and, as they think, to a dependance on their own will. A monarch here, or even at Morocco, muſt poſſeſs uncommon degrees of popularity, wiſdom, and ſcience, as well as power, before he can venture to meddle with the religion of his ſubjects. The worſt kinds of religion ſeem to be the moſt immovable, and to have the ſtrongeſt hold and the moſt influence on the minds and manners of the people.

LETTER XIX.

Sierra Morena.—Olavide.—Cordova.—The Moors, their Arts, Manners, Taſte.—Walks.—Society.—Cortejos.—Situation.

Coruna.

I PROCEED with the memorandums of our journey. From theſe I wiſh to pick you out ſome obſervations, and, for the ſake of brevity, they will probably be as detached and unconnected as ever. I wiſh not to trouble you nor myſelf much about local knowledge, which muſt have been publiſhed by former travellers and antiquaries.

The two little new ſettlements in the Sierra Morena, of Swiſs and Germans, chiefly vagabonds, have not ſucceeded very well, but better perhaps than there was reaſon to expect, even in ſpite of the oppoſition of ignorance and ſuperſtition, the conſtant enemies of every improvement; and

and againſt that ſtill more powerful enemy, the national government, which, in moſt countries, is unfit for ſuch detail, and particularly ſo in this. You know men in general want little more of its aſſiſtance than a ſmall portion of liberty and protection; but in the caſe of a new colony, ſomewhat more was wanting, and more than this government could give, viz. that the aſſiſtance ſhould be directed by good ſenſe and practical knowledge.

Many of the people have died, from poverty and real want, from change of climate and food, and from their own vices and helpleſs idleneſs, while others have run away. Many of them being but bad ſubjects in their own country, could not be expected to become good citizens here. However, moſt of the houſes firſt built are ſtill inhabited, though the expected additions are not yet found neceſſary.

At Gran Carlotta, the houſes are ill-placed, and evidently by perſons who were no farmers, and the poſſeſſions of each too ſmall; with ſeveral other material defects, which make it almoſt impoſſible that any conſiderable

conſiderable improvement in agriculture can be introduced or extended, which was the chief object: ſo that ſome of the few remaining people have taken to making hats and baſkets of ſtraw, and ſelling them to paſſengers.

On ſeeing a ragged Spaniard ſit playing on a guitar among the Germans that were at work, ſome obvious remarks on that characteriſtic trait were unavoidable; but two of my Spaniſh companions were very angry with the third for joining with me in thoſe obſervations. This national pride might ſurely be turned to ſome good account by a wiſe government; and what contributes now to indolence and poverty, might produce induſtry and wealth.

Carolina is much prettier, and a better village, with ſome good gardens, fences, and trees; but it ſeems already on the decline. Many houſes and fences are neglected and in ruins, ſince they loſt Olavide, their late excellent intendant. He was taken up by the Inquiſition, chiefly for having oppoſed the introduction of friars into his ſettlement. You may have ſeen his ſentence,

tence, well calculated to ſupport the pretenſions of that horrid tribunal to be the firſt power of the ſtate, and its claims of controlling every other. We were told (as a ſecret) by ſome people here, that Olavide was always pleaſed and happy at the proſperity of any one, and aſſiſted each according to his merit and induſtry; but that his ſucceſſor, on the contrary, diſtreſſes and levies moſt on the moſt ſucceſsful, in the true modern Spaniſh ſpirit of finance and jealouſy. The original contracts of government with theſe poor people begin now to be infringed, which will probably ſoon ruin the ſettlement, and reſtore theſe little ſpots again to their ſurrounding deſerts. A tax of eighty-ſix thouſand reals has been lately levied on their wines, againſt an expreſs article of their agreement. The funds for repairs have been diminiſhed, and diverted to other purpoſes. The great pleaſure of finding here milk, butter, and cheeſe, you will not eaſily conceive.

There is much fine land on the Guadalquivir, or great river, and it might eaſily

be made navigable again to Cordova at leaſt, which would help greatly to improve the country, and from this one river might iſſue ſupplies for half Europe, in oils, wines, &c. There is much rich low land in the plains of Seville, and ſome remains of former good methods of Mooriſh cultivation, as well as in Murcia and Valencia. But ſtill, for ſo rich a ſoil, the population and villages are but thin; though they are ſaid to have been very numerous during the time of the Romans, and afterwards of the Moors. We may find ſome information on this ſubject from various authors; and particularly, I am told, from a Mooriſh writer, *Racis*.

Cordova occupies a noble ſituation on the banks of this river, ſurrounded by a great variety of rich and grand country. Before it, to the ſouth, is a boundleſs but varied plain: behind, to the north, are the ſublime mountains of Sierra Morena, full of woods, water, and a variety of ſoils,—of charming ſituations, where the Romans, and afterwards the Moors, had many delightful country-houſes and pa-

laces;

laces; but it is now all a howling wilderneſs.

Were I king of Spain, I think this ſhould be my capital, for many reaſons. I would go to Seville in winter, and perhaps to Granada in Auguſt. The river would then ſoon become navigable much higher. I ſhould be within a day's journey of Seville, Cadiz, Granada, and little more from Carthagena. With thoſe places ſo near, almoſt in ſight from my magnificent mountains, I think I could govern the world; but I hope I ſhould be liberal enough not to attempt it, but only ſhew them how to govern themſelves.

Many houſes, and I believe whole towns, have been built from the ruins of thoſe of the Romans, the beauties of which, their barbarous conquerors and ſucceſſors could neither reliſh nor eſtimate. Such is the melancholy hiſtory of nations and their works, deſtroying and deſtroyed by turns; ſo that it is more ſurpriſing that any thread of their ſtory ſhould be preſerved, than that it ſhould be loſt. The Moors were mercileſs deſtroyers at firſt, and even after they

were conſiderably advanced, and had learned to build, they uſed to cram the elegant capitals, friezes, inſcriptions of the Romans, often turned upſide down, into the common walls of their huge and melancholy buildings. And even when moſt improved by riches and luxury, their manners and character ſtill retained the ſame dull melancholy caſt, which probably proceeded from their former Aſiatic habits of a recluſe and jealous way of living; and this is what may have contributed moſt to give the ſame turn to the taſte and character of the Spaniards, their neighbours and ſucceſſors, which has laſted ſo long, and is only beginning of late to wear out.

I think it likewiſe appears, from their remains, that the Moors never cultivated any of the fine arts with any tolerable ſucceſs, except poetry. Some of the uſeful arts and trades were improved, perhaps to ſome ſmall degree of taſte, or rather of neatneſs. They ſeem never to have had any idea of outſide architecture, or of ſhewing the beauties of their habitations, or any indication of their happineſs, to the

world. All their pleaſures were ever jealouſly ſhut up from the view of their fellow-creatures. To what a number of ſocial virtues and pleaſures they muſt have been ſtrangers! None of the fine arts can probably be introduced or flouriſh without architecture, which muſt lead, and partly govern the reſt.

Some of their palaces, which on the outſide looked like priſons, have however been ſupplied with luxuriant ornaments and conveniences within. Among theſe, the works in plaſter make the firſt and beſt figure: but their painting and ſculpture were wretched. Even the carpenters and ſmiths ſeem always to have been but poor workmen. Nor did the Moors ever probably poſſeſs many good methods of applying the mechanical powers, by convenient machines, that facilitate and abbreviate labour.

The Eaſtern ſelfiſh recluſe way of life; the ſeparation of the ſexes, of trades, families, tribes; we may conſider as a leading principle, which will help to explain theſe, and many other ſtriking differences

between their arts and manners, and thoſe of Europe. Hence their ignorance of the powers of mutual aſſiſtance, and of the progreſs in mechanical inventions and improvements; of divided and of united labour; of manufactories, and of armies: hence their ſimple and independent little ways of each workman doing every thing for himſelf; their great proficiency in many domeſtic trades and employments, and their weakneſs in the aggregate: hence their want of ſocial virtues and talents; and hence their ignorance of all ſpecies of government, except deſpotiſm, may be chiefly deduced.

Yet they had ſome liking for the beauties of nature and of pleaſant ſituations; but when they found them, they ſeemed only deſirous to ſhut them up, with their huge mud or taby walls. Theſe they contrived to make ſtick together, ſo as to laſt a long time, though never equally with thoſe of ſtone, as ſome have thought. This mode of building you may find deſcribed in various authors and dictionaries. The choice and mixture of the materials muſt have been

been the eſſential parts of the art. When well worked and brought to the conſiſtency of clay, or ſtiff mortar, it was then rammed, by ſmall portions, on the wall, while confined by frames, which were afterwards removed as the work dried. This method, as well as that of plaſter and many others, took its riſe from a littleneſs in their ways of working, and from their want of power to manage great weights. Yet they induſtriouſly improved the arts of agriculture, which muſt have advanced ſeveral others; and we know they ſedulouſly ſtudied and improved the ſciences, and were then by far the firſt people of their time. Human nature is ever full of inconſiſtencies.

Cordova wears now but a poor and melancholy appearance, and ſeems ſunk in indolence, dirt, ruins, miſery, and convents. The palace of the great Almanzor is turned into an Inquiſition, that is, the part which is not in ruins. Indeed, moſt of their beautiful remains in this country are now in ruins, or buried under ground, or, which is nearly the ſame, diſpoſed of to friars,

who have altered or defaced them from motives of ſuperſtitious enmity; except ſome of thoſe at Granada, which have been ſlightly repaired by Mr. Wall.

We could find only two artiſts here, Frenchmen, and they are but poorly ſupported, chiefly by the church. But they are on the point of departure. Some of their beſt works, ſtatues, and vaſes, which they had been long preparing for the public walk here, were thrown down and deſtroyed the firſt night, by the barbarous populace, to the great mortification of the poor artiſts, and of the *Corregidor*, a man of ſome taſte, who had before improved the public walks of Eſija. Such is the fate of arts and philoſophy in this country, which gives a tolerable image of the great progreſs with which this nation has been flattering itſelf, ever ſince the Bourbon ſucceſſion to theſe kingdoms. The Bourbons certainly do not mean that Spain ſhould advance far in arts, population, or power; otherwiſe they might and would have taken other methods to accompliſh it.

A decent

A decent public walk *(Alameda)* to every town, is a very agreeable and commendable part of public police, and is ſtill kept up in Spain with more aſſiduity and good taſte, than in many better countries.

We alſo found here ſome very fine women, and agreeable ſociety; and, I think, the ſex have been more favoured in theſe countries, and particularly Granada, as to perſonal beauty, than in moſt other parts of Spain; perhaps from ſome remaining mixture of Mooriſh blood. You know my prepoſſeſſions in favour of mixing different races of people.

In moſt of their conſiderable country towns, we ſtill meet with ſome gentry, who, with the church and the military, form very agreeable little ſocieties, *tertulias*; the merits and pleaſures of which are chiefly owing to the good humour, native graces, wit, and affability, of the ladies, ſo generally remarkable in this nation.

La Ciceſbeatura (el cortejar) ſeems now as univerſally and firmly eſtabliſhed in this country as in Italy, and this kind of illicit love connections ſeems to be tacitly underſtood,

ſtood, and agreed to, by all the parties concerned. The ſtranger, ſoon after his arrival, is impatiently expected to fix his choice, make his preſents, and go through the uſual *formulæ* of ſuch attachments, in which they are more conſtant, and more in earneſt, than their neighbours the French, or even the Italians. From the pleaſures of thoſe agreeable ſocieties, we are perhaps too ready to forgive the deficiencies of the members as individuals; but when we come coolly to conſider the tendency of their manners, truth and virtue require that we withdraw ſome part of our eſteem.

The provincial gentry, in imitation of their ſuperiors in the capital, thus lead moſtly an idle, and what we ſhould call an uſeleſs, perhaps a vicious life, divided between the coach, cards, the church, and intrigue. A manly education, and uſeful ſtudies; foreign travel; virtues and abilities of public importance, or any efforts for the good of the country; are little thought of, or attempted, perhaps becauſe they may appear inapplicable to any beneficial purpoſe in this country; and the private ſatiſfaction

faction of ſuch acquirements is ſeldom found to be a ſufficient motive to overcome the trouble they may coſt. But the Spaniards ſeem born with a diſpoſition to mirth, dancing, muſic: the practice and proficiency in theſe, form at once the ſum of their endowments, the amuſement of their ſocieties, and the chief buſineſs of their lives, and indeed may procure them greater happineſs than more ſolid or ſerious occupations could do in this country. There are, however, many exceptions to all theſe too general ideas, and doubtleſs more than we can know of; and even thoſe amiable women who belong to ſociety, *par état*, may go through the forms preſcribed by cuſtom, probably with perfect innocence.

This nation, though not changeable, is uſually in extremes. A real, though rather a tacit opinion, ſeems now to prevail, of the innocence and propriety of thoſe lateral love attachments, as much as it was formerly againſt them. Many, I know, are ſecretly perſuaded, that where the pleaſures of all concerned are increaſed, without injury to any other perſon, there

can

can be nothing really criminal or injurious. No inquiſitorial ſeverity can ſtifle every private opinion. Such opinions and practices have often privately prevailed in this nation. We might inſtance the *iluminados* during the reign of Philip IV. and lately *la bella union*.

In toleration, Chriſtianity, or at leaſt popery, has, I believe, been generally outdone by Mahometiſm. Here, at Cordova, as arts and learning advanced among the Moors, religious toleration kept pace, and there were many intermarriages between the Mahometans and Chriſtians. If their empire could have remained, and continued to improve, it might have helped to haſten the advancement and civilization of Europe as well as of the world, to reconcile thoſe two inimical ſects, and ſoften that barbarous inveteracy, which muſt now perhaps for ever, attend their local ſeparation, till the one exterminate the other.

Spain and Spaniards might probably be conſiderably improved, if their gentlemen could be made to travel more, for they are perhaps the beſt travellers of us all, as

Rouſſeau

Rouſſeau obſerves; and if the church could be perſuaded to ſet bounds to herſelf, and more eaſily admit of ſtrangers and heretics. The great Almanzor, and others of the Mooriſh princes, could perſuade their prieſts to admit the arts, againſt their original tenets, and could make them interpret their barbarous excluſive religion into univerſal principles of benevolence. A whole race of princes of Orange could teach the different ſects of Chriſtians to tolerate each other. Are we never again to ſee a prince in this country who ſhall have at once influence and liberality enough, with force and benevolence of mind, to act with ſucceſs on ſuch principles?

LETTER XX.

Nobility.—Mirth and Happineſs.—Antiquities.—Arts and Population.

IN conſidering the nobility of ſome countries, we are led to doubt whether the firſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed ranks of men be always the beſt part of the nation, and muſt ſuſpect that there may be in the nature of hereditary honours a tendency towards degeneracy. To keep a body of nobility up to the true ſpirit of honour and virtue, perpetual and powerful motives to exertion are probably requiſite; ſuch as the ſentiments of chivalry, maintained by ſome conſtant great employ, as that of war or of legiſlation, and all other great objects of public weal. In ſuch a government as this, thoſe motives cannot probably exiſt in force and quantity ſufficient for the purpoſe. Where they have ſo little hopes of any ſignal employment, and are excluded from

from the management of public affairs, and even of their own, a life and character diſpoſed to idleneſs and diſſipation at leaſt, are among the conſequences to be expected.

If old families were not to wear out, and become extinct, leaving room for a freſh ſupply, a *corps de nobleſſe* would probably degenerate much faſter. The firſt man of his family is frequently worth all the reſt of it who come after him: indeed, we cannot expect in his pampered poſterity to find much of his ſpirit or character, which was probably formed by a life of hardſhips, dangers, and difficulties: whence then this his anxious care in providing for his poſterity ſuch a load of riches and honours as may probably render them good for nothing? This queſtion may cauſe you to think and produce various ſpeculations on ſo important a ſubject, and on human nature and ſociety, which is the chief end of theſe Letters. Your Engliſh nobility, from being hereditary legiſlators and judges, and being forced into a more temperate kind of pride, are led to have recourſe to other

other merits beſides thoſe of birth; and may be longer kept up to their proper character.

Speculative philoſophers, and book-men, may be indulged in the common cant of ill-treating heroes and conquerors, as the greateſt and beſt of them will always require ſome control. But if titles and pre-eminence were only acquired, as they ought to be, by really ſerving the public, we ſhould find by the general voice, that eminence in war firſt, and then in legiſlation or government, would moſt ennoble and diſtinguiſh men in ſociety. The employments that require the ſtrongeſt minds and moſt vigorous exertions, muſt be of the greateſt importance, and military honours will generally hold the firſt rank; nor can it probably long remain otherwiſe in any nation, as war will ever be neceſſary, at times, while men are men. In the greateſt characters, you ſee that of a warrior has ever been the chief requiſite; and this has always been perceived by ſuch men; and on their early perception of it, have their riſe and future greatneſs been built. The

modern

modern orders of nobility, though originally military, having loſt much of the ancient ſpirit and purity of chivalry, may have greatly changed and probably weakened the force and enthuſiaſm of character in the firſt ranks of men: hence a frequent and neceſſary recourſe, in modern times, to new honorary diſtinctions: and ſome wiſe prince may yet find a great reſource in diſtributing honours according to their original intention, and in beſtowing the higheſt titles on military merit. It is ſaid, they are trying this in Ruſſia, but I believe it requires a free or mixed government to give ſuch a meaſure all its effect: with them it is only a piece of fooliſh affectation, with which that court ſeems full as plentifully ſtored as any other. This, and ſeveral other of her aſſuming operations, look as if Ruſſia laid herſelf out entirely for conqueſt, and only ſerve to make the world jealous and afraid of her, without cauſe; for ſhe cannot in fact be in a ſtate to produce real dread or danger to Europe, perhaps for many ages to come; and then the world may all be improved

and civilized, which will render any general conqueſt impoſſible.

If the European governments have moſt of them a gradual tendency towards a refined ſpecies of deſpotiſm; if the old romantic notions of honour, and all the remains of chivalry, muſt, by degrees, wear out, and the races of nobles naturally degenerate, while the people, or third eſtate, are nobody (except with you), and muſt therefore afford but a bad ſupply to recruit the *corps de nobleſſe*; what control will then remain over mankind, the governors or governed, both naturally more vicious and improvident as government degenerates into tyranny, and gets beyond all reſtraint? Where will nations then find virtue and honour ſufficient to arreſt, or even regulate the progreſs of depravity, and prevent the ruin of themſelves and their poſterity? What can then ſtop the decline of this old and worn-out part of the world? Europe muſt, perhaps, in time follow the ſteps and the fate of Aſia, eſpecially if ſhe ſhould ever be tempted again to purſue her conqueſts in that quarter. But I ſhall not now trouble

trouble you with profecuting theſe airy ſpeculations any farther; they are only ſtarted as hints for your future conſideration, and not unworthy the attention of the philoſopher who watches the tendency of our manners and ſyſtems of government.

But to return to Spain. Many miſtake the preſent character of the Spaniards, and particularly their jealouſy and gravity. I believe you will find leſs jealouſy, and more good mirth among them, than in all the affected gaiety and noiſe of ſome of their neighbours. There is, to be ſure, in the very exceſs and abundance of their wit, joy, and good humour, a certain ſteady evenneſs of manner, equally diſtant from levity, as from pedantry or affectation; this is obſervable in all they do. With a kind of dry and grave humour, one of the company will often talk or ſing all the reſt into an extreme of mirth and laughter, preſerving all the while a moſt ſerene and placid firmneſs of countenance himſelf, *como quien no dice nada*. We find in them more mirth and happineſs than may at firſt ſeem compatible with their poverty and in-

dolence. But fortunately, ſuch is often the lot of poor countries: *poco bien y bien quiſto.* The ſcarcity of good things ſeems to be fully compenſated by the more lively enjoyment of the few they retain. Some wants and difficulties ſeem to be among the neceſſary ingredients of human life: we are ſoon ſpoiled by plenty and indulgence. Voluntary exertions cannot always be equal to thoſe of neceſſity. Riches and ſucceſs will, in general, diminiſh our powers both of body and mind, by removing at once the ſources of exertions and enjoyment. Human nature happily accommodates itſelf to ſituation; and this cheerful, though careleſs manner of wearing their chains, is probably the beſt for the preſent condition of theſe people, *y aſi no ay mal que por bien no venga*, as Sancho's ſtories go: every thing has its uſe. When we think of improving the world, we ſhould firſt conſider well, whether happineſs may not be already more equally diſtributed than could be done by all our wiſdom and benevolence; and that every conſiderable alteration in

ſociety

ſociety ſhould be much wanted and deſired by the people themſelves before it is attempted: let us not force it on them before we have taught them to wiſh for it.

This country affords more objects for the antiquary than the artiſt: few remarkable pieces of modern art are to be found, except in the royal palaces: yet Spain, you know, has produced ſome good painters and tolerable architects; a few of theſe have ſtruck out new paths, I think, with ſome ſucceſs. The builder of the Eſcurial was a man of genius, and had grand ideas. If it was really intended to be built in the form of a gridiron, the idea probably came from Philip.

The remains of antiquity here have been learnedly treated by their own antiquaries, though not yet ſufficiently dug up by the workmen: and theſe are hitherto objects of mere curioſity, without any influence on the national taſte or improvement, as with you, where your carpenters and ſmiths begin already to work in the ſtyle of thoſe of Greece and Rome. I

hope you now perceive, that the 8000l. to Sir W. H—, for thoſe muſeum antiquities, was not thrown away; and we may hope that the labours of a Bentley, a Wedgewood, and other ingenious manufacturers, will turn to public benefit, and the diffuſion of good taſte.

The Spaniards might learn many good things from the Roman monuments and antiquities; as, the police, management, and diviſion of the country; roads and modes of communication; methods of building, of watering, cultivating, and dividing their lands; in various arts and trades: they might alſo learn much from ſome of theſe Germans, and other foreigners; from Catalonia, and ſtill more from Biſcaya, and ſometimes even at their own doors: they have many examples ſcattered about the kingdom of what they ought to do: but it is too plain, that no example, or temporary public aſſiſtance, can have its natural effects here. Some of the fineſt parts of their country are the leaſt peopled, their extenſive *ſierras*: this of Sierra Morena, which extends from

Murcia to Portugal, is full of fine vallies, with a variety of ſoils, of wood and water, which are all wanting in their arid plains, the only parts they have attempted to inhabit, and which are accordingly very thinly peopled and miſerably cultivated. They ſeem determined to ſpare no labour in counteracting nature, and juſtly ſucceed in proportion to the wiſdom of their efforts.

There are more paintings at Seville than at Cordova. We found there ſome gentlemen collectors, and a good many pieces of Morillo, particularly in the convent where he ended his days. This devout way of paſſing the latter part of life in convents, continues ſtill to be the faſhion in Spain, in which they are perhaps more conſiſtent with their principles than ourſelves. I cannot pretend to be ſuch a connoiſſeur as to carry in my eye, from one diſtant country to another, the meaſure of merit of different maſters; but it appears to me, as if Velaſquez and Morillo ſhould ſtand next to the very firſt of the Italian ſchool,

not only as faithful imitators of nature, but ſometimes ſoaring above her, towards the true ſublime, and particularly the former; the one ſeems to dignify, and the other to beautify nature.

LETTER XXI.

Country.—Seguidillas.—Timber.—Sheep.—Corporations.—Nitre.—Military Schools.—Aranjuez.

Madrid, 1779.

WE have paſſed through an eſtate of the duke of Alva, near Cordova, a country abounding in beauties, as uſual about the ſkirts of mountains, but more particularly about this ſublime Sierra Morena. It was there the late Duke was baniſhed, and he conſiderably improved the lands, planting olive-woods, building ſome good oil-mills, ſtores, &c. We found a wheel on the river, forty feet diameter, which raiſed water nearly to that height, for watering ſome gardens, ſo ſimple as to require no attendance, but only repairs.

La Mancha — the country of the renowned Don Quixote, may be remarked for

for ſimplicity, poverty, mirth, and muſic. The country reſembles moſt of the other internal Spaniſh plains, a dry, naked, brown clay, without a green ſpot, and hardly a ſhrub to be ſeen, except when the vines are in leaf. But in theſe few poor clay villages, there is plenty of good wine and good bread, and nothing but dancing and ſinging in or out of doors all the evenings. Poverty and mirth go together in theſe happy climes.

This ſeems the original country of thoſe charming little ſongs called *Seguidillas*; their natural ſoil, where they grow ſpontaneouſly, made often *extempore*, and ſeldom written or noted down. Great numbers are made, ſung, and danced here, which are never known in the reſt of Spain, and they are probably more in the true old national taſte, than even at Madrid. I was ſorry I had not time to make a larger collection of them. We could willingly, and pleaſantly, have paſſed much more time in ſome of thoſe poor places. There is, in Spaniſh manners, in the language, mirth, and *gracia* of the people, a ſomething

thing that attaches and engages thoſe who enter into the taſte and ſpirit of it, but which, till then, is incomprehenſible to the ſtranger or paſſing viſitor.

We might almoſt meaſure the degrees of bad government, in different countries, by the deſtruction or want of timber. In Spain, ſcarce a tree is to be ſeen, except ſuch as yet grow among inacceſſible mountains. It is ſaid that timber diminiſhes even in England, where ſo much is planted. Man is a deſtructive animal where he is not well treated. He requires good uſage, and great ſecurity, to render him provident for a future day, and eſpecially for poſterity.

We met ſome of the *ganado merino*, or fine wool ſheep, in large ſtraggling flocks, on their travels from the northern mountains to winter in the ſouthern plains. Some flocks travel above a hundred long leagues twice a year. But Bowles will give you all the particulars. Salt is a neceſſary part of their food. There is ſtill, I find, ſome diſpute even here about the proper quantity. The breeding of

thoſe

thoſe fine wool ſheep is probably only fit for a country like this, thinly inhabited, little cultivated, and without fences: but I doubt of its being the moſt profitable kind of produce, even here, where every thing would grow, I believe, with a little more pains and more water, both of which might be had. However, this wool has long been a national object in Spain: they have a code of laws on purpoſe. The privileges of the *Meſta* (or ſheep company) probably prevent incloſures, planting, and improvements: the want of trees moſt likely contributes to their want of water. It ſeems the fine wool is worth above a hundred reals *per aroba*, but the common ſort only twelve or fifteen.

Let all ſtates beware of great corporate bodies of people, and admit even ſmall ones only on very good and obvious reaſons. The natural ſubdiviſion of ſociety is into families; collective bodies more numerous may be dangerous or injurious to the public, and may be eaſily brought to combine againſt the reſt of the nation.

The

The principles and formation of great companies and corporations are not yet well underſtood. England, Holland, &c. after having got rid of the old ſtyle of monopolies, are probably launching again too far, in admitting new kinds of corporate bodies, of *imperia in imperio*. The true ſpirit and natural operations of thoſe may not be underſtood, till one, or ſome eaſy combination of them, ſhall ſeize or over-rule the ſtate.

There muſt be much nitre in the air here, or the earth muſt be well adapted for generating or extracting it from thence, or both; for the ſame heaps of earth, without any change, addition, or mixture, give nearly the ſame quantity of ſaltpetre every year, at the works near Tembleque. This I was told by ſeveral different ſets of workmen. They have powder-mills on the Guadiana, near this place.

We ſaw their horſe-academy at *Ocano*, for educating officers for the cavalry only. This is a ſmall town with eleven convents. The plan of this ſchool, like moſt other Spaniſh

Spaniſh ideas on public matters, is too great ever to be completed. Their deſigns are generally gigantically magnificent, and impracticable: Muley Iſhmael's palaces. If all the ſix or ſeven military ſchools, ſcattered about this kingdom, were united into one or two, they would probably be attended with more effect and œconomy.

The modern practice of dividing and ſubdividing labour, ſo neceſſary in moſt arts and trades, is apt to be carried too far, and to be adopted where it is unneceſſary, or hurtful, as in the military. Since this ſpirit of ſeparating things which are naturally connected has taken place; ſince we attend more to fancied and forced diſtinctions, than to natural connections of things, and are loſt in a diminutive ſtyle of minute philoſophy; I think the ſtrength of genius and of fancy has diminiſhed, and the human mind has degenerated, ſince thoſe times when a man could be at once a ſtateſman, philoſopher, ſoldier, muſician, poet, author, &c. But a man

a man now takes only a part of a profeſſion, and is fit for nothing elſe. Even an officer of horſe is often a novice in the affairs of infantry. I ſhould rather be inclined to think, with Cicero and Vitruvius, that no man can be very great in any thing of importance, without knowing almoſt every thing. All is connected in this world: though, I believe, I preached this doctrine before to our friend C——; I wiſh you, in particular, to conſider it well, that you may endeavour to become great as a ſoldier, a ſenator, a farmer, &c. for they all aſſiſt each other.

Aranjuez has many beauties in its fine ſhady walks, river, and gardens; occupying a pretty little plain, which ſinks down to a level with the river, and is hidden from the rude and naked high country that ſurrounds it; a fine picture in a huge ugly frame: a pleaſant and ſhady, but not cheerful, retreat. There is ſomething rather melancholy and Mooriſh about ſome of the gardens and buildings. And about

about Spaniſh places, I think, there is generally ſomething in a ruined or unfiniſhed ſtate, that tends to deaden the whole. The chapel, ſome pictures, and apartments, merit attention; but I muſt leave the deſcription to others.

LETTER XXII.

Madrid.—Arts.—People.—Eſcurial.—Old Caſtile.—Flocks.—Towns.—Church.—Corn.—Water.—Government.

I WISH to haſten through this journey, which you may begin to think rather tireſome, as I do; and I muſt tell you, for your comfort, that moſt other Spaniſh travellers think the ſame. However, with your youth, curioſity, and a little more practice in the language, you may eaſily, and even pleaſantly, get over all their magnified difficulties. Though I do not intend to trouble you with many particulars, I will not promiſe that ſome reflections may not ſtill interrupt our progreſs, and exerciſe your patience, for which you will have ſo much occaſion here.

Of *Madrid*, the particulars I ſhall leave to other ample accounts, already publiſhed: it is now a tolerably clean country town,

with ſome few good ſtreets and buildings; but no pleaſant environs: the moment you get without the gates, you may fancy yourſelf in a Spaniſh deſert again. The king has an excellent collection of pictures in his new and magnificent palace: but you have, and will ſoon have more laboured accounts of all theſe things, by profeſſed connoiſſeurs.

It muſt be allowed, that moſt princes now take ſome pains to encourage and revive the arts; but theſe do not ſeem to anſwer the call any where ſo readily as with you; and it gives pleaſure to fancy and foreſee them repairing to our iſland to increaſe and multiply, as to a better ſoil than they can now find in any other country. It would ſeem, that theſe great monarchs of the world have loſt the ſecret of alluring or propagating them. I do not hear of any Spaniſh ſtudents above mediocrity. Wealth, ſecurity, then leiſure, travel, and various motives, muſt conſpire to produce a taſte for the beauties of nature and the ancients. Princes do not ſeem to know, that if all the arts and ſciences were

ſome-

ſomehow, by chance or force, introduced into any country that is badly or deſpotically governed, and hence defective in ſecurity, they could not be fixed or remain there, but would moſt probably diſappear with the generation that introduced them.

This town of Madrid is not yet a very healthy place I believe, from what we can learn, and from the bilious ſallow aguiſh appearance of its inhabitants: they are not in general a ſtout nor a handſome people, and have a certain look of ſecret diſcontent or reſignation, or ſomething between theſe, which it is eaſier to obſerve than explain.

Though the Spaniards, in general, may not appear to you, at firſt, ſo handſome or good looking a people as ſome other of the more northern races, yet in other parts of the kingdom, you will find, after a little habit and examination, that they have a certain regularity and graceful ſtrength of countenance beyond moſt other nations: and that they have more bodily ſtrength, vigour, and ſpirit, than their dry and meagre appearance may ſeem to indicate;

and this will appear on the few occaſions that occur to excite their exertion.

The *Eſcurial*—a romantic bold ſituation, on the hills that ſkirt the Guadarrama range of mountains. The building in the bold and ſimple Doric, ſo uncommon and unexpected in ſuch a country: yet, on the whole, I think it far beneath the degrees and effects of beauty and grandeur, which might be expected from ſo much labour and materials: and, as uſual, this, and every thing in the country, ſeems doomed to be ſpoilt by ſomething or other diſagreeably melancholy, dirty, or mean: here a number of ſmall and broken windows; a want of repairs, and of cleanlineſs; an ugly weather-beaten kind of ſtone, &c. all contribute to give to the whole a triſte and uninhabited appearance. The neglected ſtate of the grounds and fences, the dulneſs of the court, and want of amuſements, may ſtrike one with Mooriſh ideas and reſemblances: but I do not mean to dwell much in or on palaces, and muſt again refer you to others.

We

We go on from the Eſcurial, aſcending theſe Guadarrama mountains, and from the higheſt get a view of the great plains of Old Caſtile before us; and look back upon thoſe of the new, behind us, over Madrid, and far beyond it: both ways a grand and extenſive, but not a very cheerful, proſpect: a naked brown country during great part of the year. If I could chuſe my party, I believe I ſhould like better to examine theſe wild and romantic mountains than thoſe half-peopled plains: all their mountains are full of intereſting objects, and of ſublime and beautiful ſcenes; but they are few, and diſtant from each other.

I do not find much that is worth copying and conſidering from the *memoranda* of ſeveral journies through the now naked plains of Old Caſtile and Leon; where there is, indeed, ſo little to be ſeen, beſides ſome ſcattered flocks of ſheep, and a few clay towns and villages, very thinly ſcattered, full of dirt, poverty, and ruins, appearing as if lately burnt down: ſcarce a tree, or any thing green, to be ſeen during moſt of the year; often in want of water, of

timber, and of every thing comfortable; only ſtraw for fuel, beds, ſeats, &c. In ſome of the wool towns, *i. e.* where the wool is waſhed, we ſaw ſome houſes with a few glaſs windows, as a very rare ſight.

We found that thoſe large flocks of ſheep belong moſtly to a few great proprietors, chiefly nobility, who live in Madrid, while their wretched and neglected country ſeems given up to waſte, or to theſe few ſcattered flocks, and ragged ſolitary ſhepherds: but their management of wool and ſheep, Spain has retained perhaps better than any other art; and in its preſent ſtate, is probably one of the fitteſt for producing wool, and if it muſt want water, there is much of it that can hardly be turned to any other uſe: for which reaſon I think it is not the country fitteſt for working up the wool, nor for many other operations that require great population and induſtry. The producing and the working up of materials, are not neceſſarily, nay are often incompatible, in the ſame country: a country of ſhepherds cannot be full of manufactures: ſome countries we find fit for one thing,

and

and ſome for another; ſome to produce materials, others to fabricate them: and if each nation would be wiſe enough to keep to its own natural ſtaple, it would doubtleſs be much better for the world at large. Yet they might, and would probably have ſome more manufactories in their towns here, if their government had any wiſdom or goodneſs to refrain from taxing them, and to give ſufficient ſecurity, liberty, toleration: or rather if they were to aboliſh this government, and create a new one. Of the preſent ſtate of Spain, I hope you begin to form ſome general ideas, which I think are ſufficient, and always the beſt to begin with: a general notion of its natural hiſtory you may acquire from *Bowles*; and our good friend D. *Ign. Aſo*, may ſhew you his ſubterraneous or mineralogic map of it. Theſe extenſive plains conſiſt of other leſſer ones, of different heights or levels, ſinking ſuddenly by ſteep precipices, where two or three different ſtrata appear, of ſeveral yards thickneſs each, all horizontal: the upper ſtrata viſibly form the ſurrounding mountains, though

at a great diſtance. Such is the make, and I think, a tolerable ſhort deſcription of this, and of ſeveral other great plains in the world.

Their chief towns lie among the ſkirts of the different mountains that almoſt ſurround this great plain, as Segovia, Valladolid, Burgos, Leon, Aſtorga (for accounts of which ſee Pontz). There, the country generally begins to be more varied, more interſperſed with villages and cultivation, and we can ſee that it has formerly been ſtill more ſo: ruins of villages, caſtles, and cultivation, may yet be traced: and in thoſe cities, ſome melancholy remains of ancient magnificence ſtill appear through their preſent ruins, filth, and poverty. Burgos I think one of the moſt intereſting of theſe towns; it was formerly the reſidence of their princes. Some ſtreets, conſiſting of old palaces of former nobility, appeared to be ſcarcely habitable, but we were told that they are ſtill occupied by genteel families; poor gentry, of which this country has ſtill ſome remains, too proud and too lazy to work.

There

There is ſcarcely any thing in tolerable order in Spain but their churches: the old cathedral here is one of their fineſt Gothic ſtructures. Though the parts are of very different and capricious ſtyles of architecture; the whole is noble without being heavy: but the Greek and the Gothic never join well, in my opinion, though the moderns are always attempting it, as here, and I think ſtill without ſucceſs. They tell us, this place is much improved ſince the wool duties began to be collected in it, and the export turned to St. Ander; it muſt then have been wretched indeed before that period.

Leon may have been, and might eaſily again be made a very fine city: ſituated on ſome ſmall rivers, as they iſſue from the mountains to the north of it, and which form a noble back ground, with much fine country and good ſoil all around. Here is a charming convent or abbey, poſſeſſed by the prieſts of St. Jago: but Pontz will ſoon give us large accounts of all theſe.

They have, however, in theſe dry brown plains of Caſtile, ſometimes tolerable crops

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of wheat, and of a good hard grain; but they attempt little or no other produce. Poverty, the church, and want of markets for their ſurplus produce, if they had any, are among their greateſt, and are quite ſufficient obſtacles to their improvement in agriculture. It would doubtleſs be difficult, and has hitherto been impoſſible, to open a communication ſufficient to tranſport corn from theſe inland parts, which are ſhut up from the ſea and from each other by mountains. The plans long in agitation, of roads and canals for theſe purpoſes, have not been formed with any adequate preciſion or knowledge of the ſubject or of the country, and are impracticable in its preſent ſtate of population. They complain likewiſe of a want and uncertainty of water and of crops; but this was not always the caſe; or at leaſt not to ſo great a degree, when better planted and peopled. We know, that in former times corn has been exported from Spain, and that numerous armies and inhabitants have been ſupported in theſe now naked deſerts; there muſt then have been

ſome

ſome mode of watering them to a certain extent. Some Roman remains ſhew us one very good and ſimple method of watering certain diſtricts, by forming large reſervoirs, like lakes, of the ſtreams as they iſſue from the mountains; by great embankments at proper places; and then by letting off the water in ſmall channels to the lower grounds. This method is practiſed in Portugal, and there are ſome Roman works of this kind ſtill in uſe near Merida and at Alicant; and remains of them at other places. Such reſources ſeem abſolutely neceſſary to agriculture in the internal parts of this peninſula, where there is generally a want of rain during the ſummer and autumn quarters. We can hardly judge from the appearance of a country in its deſert and uncultivated ſtate, of what it may be capable, nor of its former appearance when cultivated and populous: even the neceſſary moiſture of the ſoil may have diſappeared from theſe plains with the trees and cultivation: in that ſtate, ſome countries become gradually covered

covered with ſand, which would be prevented by annual tillage.

But all theſe obſtacles of nature, which I ſuſpect they exaggerate, might be conſiderably overcome, if thoſe of miſtaken policy and bad government were once removed. In ſhort, I muſt frequently repeat my text, that the form of government, or of ſociety, is of the firſt importance, however overlooked or miſtaken by travellers, poets, or the people themſelves. Our reſearches into the moral or political cauſes of national proſperity or decline, generally terminate there. Certain forms of government neceſſarily produce application, knowledge, wiſdom, ſecurity, induſtry; and to theſe every thing is poſſible. Around ſome of their towns, moſt of the lands to a good diſtance are in ſome ſort of tillage, but they cannot afford to meliorate them, and muſt prefer ploughing up badly more freſh land, to the labour and expence of improving the old. Both might be done under wiſe laws, and an equitable government; the proprietors living more on their eſtates,

eſtates, diſpoſing of them as they pleaſed, and ſufficiently intereſted and ſecured in their produce and profits, the conſequent increaſe of population, would conſpire to overcome thoſe obſtacles of nature, and to extend and improve all the arts connected with the cultivation of the earth: the products would ſoon increaſe; roads and canals might then be made by degrees: all theſe things would mutually aſſiſt each other; their ſurplus would gradually find its way to diſtant markets, and new ones would appear at home.

LETTER XXIII.

Examples.—Colonies and Companies.—Eaſt Indies.

To Mr. C.

THOUGH it is very uncommon to wiſh to go twice the ſame route in this country, yet, if you were to tempt me with the party you mention, I could perhaps bear to examine it better; though, like many others, I often find myſelf getting gradually more out of humour with it, and more doubtful if any thing can be learned from hence of uſe to mankind, unleſs it be that of ſeeing and feeling, ſo to ſpeak, more forcibly the numerous evil conſequences of falſe policy, bad government, and a worſe religion: leſſons, to be ſure, of the utmoſt importance to mankind, or to nations, and which cannot be too ſtrongly enforced on them, if they could be taught to profit and take warning from the

the examples of their neighbours, and learn from the experience of each other. The errors of other nations are not unknown to us. They have been obſerved and ſtudied by ſome: but we ſeem only thereby more habituated and reconciled to them; more inclined to imitate, and to follow, than to avoid their fall. We, in particular, ſeem of late to be forgetting, that it is to the nature and form of our government we are indebted for our preeminence. The nations uſed to ſhew us to their tyrants and to their children, as ſomething approaching to what a people and government ought to be; but we already begin to loſe their reſpect and admiration. Since this mad and ruinous quarrel with our colonies, men ſeem to examine and to doubt the juſtice of your pretenſions to ſuperiority in liberty, ſenſe, ſcience, generoſity, &c.; and ſee too clearly the tyranny and abſurdity of any ſovereignty or dominion of one people or nation over another.

The modern ſyſtem of all-graſping commerce and colonization, you know, I hold

to be deſtructive in the end: and if, in ſpite of the fatal examples of Spain and Portugal before our eyes, we ſhould go on, and ſucceed in our wild and oppreſſive enterpriſes, of ſubduing and thence deſtroying thoſe American colonies, or undertake the endleſs expence of ſubjugating and maintaining a ſet of ſlaves by way of cuſtomers, our future hiſtory and progreſs will probably reſemble that of theſe countries; and if we were capable of taking and applying the examples, we could not find any better. Nay, if we retain only our Aſiatic poſſeſſions, and turn our attention and exertions to the Eaſt, proportioned to our ſuppoſed loſſes in the Weſt, endeavouring there to extend our power inſtead of our trade; forgetting our own maxims of leaving commerce alone, to find its own proper channels, its level, and its limits; the conſequences may be equally fatal to us. The prize we ſhall be tempted to purſue there, is not probably of the right kind for us, being of too great a magnitude, and may become an object for ambition, enterpriſe, and extravagance, inſtead of furniſh-

furniſhing motives to that parſimonious induſtry which belongs to commerce: it may have the ſame effects on us, as South America has had on Spain; deceiving the people as to real and uſeful riches: and the contagion may reach to government itſelf, and gradually miſlead and contaminate the whole nation.

Wherever there is a proſpect of making fortunes ſuddenly and without much trouble, that part will ſoon be overſtocked, and the gradual and induſtrious, the only uſeful method of acquiring wealth, will certainly be neglected. Hence depopulation and other numerous bad conſequences enſue. Beſides, it is to be feared, that a ſet of merchants muſt make but bad ſovereigns, and then degenerate as merchants. The two characters are probably incompatible, and muſt mutually ſpoil each other. They will ſoon begin to loſe by their trade, and then try to recover themſelves by revenue and rapacity. Though our Eaſt India company has hitherto behaved much better in thoſe ſituations than could have been expected, yet I hope we may not wait for the final

reſult, to be convinced that the ſyſtem is defective; that great companies and great conqueſts are generally real evils to a nation, and ſhould never be admitted without abſolute and obvious neceſſity; and even then, their proper eſtabliſhment and control will require more wiſdom and virtue than can perhaps be expected in any government, or even in human nature.

If the nation ſhould become intoxicated with the ſpirit of conqueſt as well as rapacity, and our executive government at home acquire the management of ſuch productive ſources of wealth, and thereby get beyond the control of parliament, and of every other control that can then be found, it may be tempted and enabled to deſtroy our conſtitution in effect, though the form ſhould remain.

For any one country to govern another well at a diſtance, is perhaps impoſſible: the few different modes that have been attempted, do not afford experience ſufficient to decide on the beſt, or on the practi-

cability of any. Though we have ſucceeded better than other nations, in the inſtance of our American colonies, chiefly by giving them our own conſtitution, and by the free enjoyment of which we might ſtill have retained them; yet the ſame method will not probably anſwer for the Eaſt; and to attempt it by means of a company, can never, in my opinion, be the beſt way. A free and open trade, under a ſtrong and reſpectable military government, if theſe two are compatible, I ſhould think the beſt mode; raiſing the people who labour into more importance, by giving them better tenures of their lands, and ſome perſonal rights. — All this muſt be done by a proper choice of perſons, more than by laws and regulations from home. The warrior and the trader are characters more compatible, and might be made to agree better than the world imagine. Among military men, while bred up in the habits of œconomy and the ſtrict notions of honour, you will have perhaps the beſt chance to find ſome of liberal and upright characters, fit for the higheſt

offices of truſt and control; eſpecially, if they themſelves are under ſome control, and obliged to acquire information: for you muſt beware of the tyranny and the ignorance as yet too natural to the profeſſion, till we adopt a proper military education.

If we examine hiſtory, we ſhall find that no nation of the Weſt was ever yet much connected with the Eaſt, without injury to themſelves, or could long retain the ſame character after, as before that connection. Of the great profits and fortunes, which will ariſe more from revenue and oppreſſion than from fair commerce, much will come home. It might be proper to trace, if we could, the probable effects of that influx; how far it may increaſe the demand for labour and induſtry, or have contrary effects, and tend to raiſe prices, to increaſe luxury too faſt, baniſh manufactories to cheaper countries, and thence depopulate and weaken the nation. Moſt of that which will be ſpent on horſes, ſervants, parks, table, looſe women, &c. will certainly act againſt induſtry,

duſtry, population, and national force; and with accelerating powers, by means of the enſuing change of manners and moral principles.

On the other hand, the fortunes ſo employed, may turn out to be a ſmall part of the immenſe profits ariſing from that trade, which may likewiſe employ many uſeful hands both aſhore and afloat, and vaſt numbers of veſſels. It would ſeem, that a wiſe government might do ſomething towards diminiſhing the hurtful, and increaſing the beneficial parts of that commerce and connection. If that trade ſhould ever come to be laid open, wholeſome competition may ſtep in, to diminiſh profits, and render time and induſtry again more neceſſary to the making of fortunes. Much will depend on the number and diſpoſition of thoſe who come home with great riches; whether they injure or improve the country where they ſettle, by their Aſiatic luxury; whether they can return to ſupport, by their riches and example, all our old manners and political conſtitution; or by laughing at both,

and ſhaming liberty and œconomy out of countenance, ſtrengthen the growing party of the debauched and corrupted.

Should we not ſucceed againſt our colonies, and thence be forced to temper the extravagant ideas of our national power and glory, but be made to attend more to œconomy, to our home and European commerce, wiſdom and moderation will be gained, and we may profit by the loſs. We may be brought back to a better point of our national career than we were before, which was probably beyond the ſummit of power and proſperity; and theſe were already leading us down the other ſide of the hill, through arts, luxury, and indulgence. But if this is not found to be the conſequence of our loſs, I ſhall be inclined to fear that the blow will be too heavy, and the retrogradation too great to be recovered, and ſhall dread the miſchievous diſſenſions that uſually attend on ill ſucceſs; hence weakneſs at home, and contempt from abroad, or haſty and inadequate remedies worſe than the diſorders. If you ſhould perſiſt too

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long in this ill humour, or mad fit of making war on your friends, and driving them into the ſcale of your enemies, and forſaking your old ſyſtems of alliances, you muſt, in the courſe of two or three ſucceſſive wars, feel the loſs and oppoſite weight of America, and muſt probably be brought down to the point which your natural enemy keeps ſo ſteadily in view for you.

LETTER XXIV.

Spaniſh Improvements.—Roads.—Canals.—People.—Laws.—Languor.

WE ſtrangers and ſojourners here are very apt to think we could eaſily improve this country. The firſt ſight of it ſuggeſts the idea: and hence, perhaps, aroſe the proverbial ſaying, *Bâtir des châteaux en Eſpagne.* But from the little ſucceſs of all thoſe who have lately attempted it, we may preſume that it is eaſier ſaid than done. Various have been the propoſals and attempts to improve it during this reign and the laſt. Both monarchs have ſet about it apparently in good earneſt and on good principles; but that is not enough. The beſt and trueſt principles are not always applicable. The beſt of their plans, ſuppoſing them really in earneſt, muſt always fail here in the execution. His preſent Majeſty was right as to the neceſſity

neceſſity and the objects of reform, could he have found in his dominions enough of probity and practical abilities, riches and induſtry, to execute his intentions; but theſe were all wanting. He ſaw that the country required public aſſiſtance and public works, before it could begin to be improved; as roads, canals, water. But it ſeems none were found who knew how to begin or accompliſh thoſe improvements; none who could foreſee that ſuch things can be done here only upon a ſmall ſcale, and by ſmall beginnings, ſuch as are within the ability of the country; and that they muſt be contented with mediocrity, or leſs perhaps, for a long time yet to come. They will have every thing at once great and magnificent; hence they fail in all, and finiſh nothing. Indeed it is probable that ſome ſecret French counſel is always at hand to lead them wrong.

No nation could more eaſily have tolerable roads acroſs their great dry plains; a very little labour at ſome places would make them paſſable, and ſufficiently good

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for the country and its preſent commerce. But they have hardly any roads, becauſe they will have them better than ordinary, though there is ſo little to carry, that they cannot prevent the graſs growing in the little bits already made. This government has been planning roads for theſe twenty or thirty years paſt, beginning and forſaking one impracticable project for another: too proud or jealous to imitate the wiſdom and œconomy of the Baſcongada provinces, or to give them up to provincial management, to the people who are more equal to the taſk, and the moſt concerned in the expence and execution. In all their plans they ſeem to inſiſt on having them three times better and more expenſive than neceſſary. The five or ſix principal roads leading to the capital, cannot, at their rate, be finiſhed in leſs than fifty years, perhaps not in a hundred, and perhaps never. But in fifty years, the parts firſt made will have fallen to ruins; for they make no proviſion for repairs, nor could it be effectually appropriated if they did. Of the roads to the capital, the

the few leagues already executed have coſt nearly a million of reals *per* league. They ſeem already to ſtop, probably unable to go on with the expence. Suppoſe the reſt to coſt only half a million *per* league, the five or ſix, of one hundred leagues each, will coſt three hundred millions. They can never probably afford five millions *per annum*, which makes it ſixty years to finiſh theſe few only. There are others equally neceſſary; as likewiſe *poſadas*, or inns, for the accommodation of travellers; for if government will not build theſe, or encourage and aſſiſt in doing it, none elſe will.

At firſt ſight, moſt of this level country of Old Caſtile ſeems capable of canals as well as of roads, and that they might be fed by the different ſtreams that form the Douro. That river, as you may ſee by the map, receives the waters of a great extent of country, from all the ſurrounding mountains of Caſtile, Leon, Aſturias, &c. which incloſe a very extenſive valley. But an accurate knowledge of the country, of its produce and materials, would be

neceſſary to determine the practicability of canals. I doubt they cannot ſoon have any thing to carry that will pay the expence: ſtraw, though the moſt likely to anſwer the purpoſe, will yet be quite inſufficient.

Such great public works, as before obſerved, would require a far greater degree of population and internal commerce; ſomething to be carried of bulk and importance, of an increaſing demand, ſufficient to pay the expence of making and repairs, which will both be great: and they have more roads and canals already planned and begun in Spain, than the moſt populous and induſtrious nation could execute: ſo little do they know their own ſtrength. It is from the great body of the people that all muſt come, both the expence and the labour: but they muſt firſt be taught to feel their own importance, and be ſure of the fruits of their induſtry, before they will undertake any thing of conſequence. They muſt be in the habits of managing the affairs of their own little diſtricts; provincial and municipal

buſineſs and juriſdictions ſhould be re-eſtabliſhed and extended, inſtead of being gradually curtailed and taken away, as has been long the practice of their government, particularly ſince the Bourbon acceſſion. Indeed the privileges and importance of the people have of courſe declined ever ſince their Cortes or Parliament was prevailed on to grant to Charles V. the ſupplies before the redreſs of grievances.

All ſocieties or governments are naturally ſlow and tedious in their progreſs, as if unwilling to change eſtabliſhed cuſtoms, though abſurd or pernicious; even deſpotiſm herſelf can only go a certain pace; and as indolence often accompanies power, ſhe is frequently the ſloweſt of all. Many things might otherwiſe have been expected of this government, and they would, ere now, have got through the whole, and have taken away the old privileges of all the particular diſtricts and townſhips: but they have ſtill left ſome, as if to increaſe the confuſion. There is more diverſity of laws and cuſtoms throughout this

this kingdom than even in France, or almoſt any other. Their different *fueros*, *conſejos*, *tribunales*, are great plagues to themſelves, and to others who have any thing to do with them. But that is not the worſt part of their juriſprudence; for it is perhaps proper, that law, in ſome caſes, ſhould coſt both trouble and expence. The great evil here is the want of juſtice and of deciſion: indeed there are ſeldom any hopes of either: as they are only to be procured through an immenſity of corruption and delay, all ideas of juſtice, right, or recovery, are often given up, without attempting a redreſs or remedy by law, which, in moſt caſes, is known to be ſo much worſe than to ſuffer the evil. So that it is difficult to conceive how ſo many people of the law can live here. They muſt, like the inn-keepers on their roads, proportionally fleece the few who fall into their hands.

In ſhort, an eternal delay, languor, and indifference, as well as corruption, ſeem to pervade every rank and every ſpecies of buſineſs, and to have ſeized the nation

nation in general, and law and government moſt of all. The conſequences, you will readily conceive, muſt be, univerſal want of credit and confidence between man and man, and hence of commerce, induſtry, arts, &c. Each muſt live perpetually on his guard, as if ſurrounded by enemies. Hence, in this ſtate of ſociety, the value, the eſteem, and frequent uſe for private friendſhips, and the remarkable fidelity of ſome, for which, you know, this nation has long been renowned; and hence the frequent aſſaſſinations, and other points of their manners and cuſtoms, might be deduced. But it is wonderful that the people in general are ſo good as we find them to be; and we are led to reſpect the moral character that can refrain from ſo much wickedneſs as might here be perpetrated with impunity.

You need not wonder at this extreme national depreſſion, nor fancy the picture *outré*. On cloſer examination, perhaps, we ſhould find there were always more of thoſe defects in the character of their government, particularly ſince they loſt their

Cortes,

Cortes, than could reach the page of the hiſtorian, who ſeldom gets at the bottom of things. We know they have fallen from a great height; and the world is but too full of inſtances of the weakneſs and total relaxation of the human mind, when once debaſed by oppreſſion.

LETTER XXV.

Tolls.—Mountains.—Mauragatos.—Galicia.—St. Jago.—Societies.—Commerce.

St. Jago.

WE find ſomething like the old tolls and exactions of the feudal barons, ſtill exiſting in ſome parts of the Spaniſh monarchy. We came to an inn on the road belonging to the duke of Alva, and then to another belonging to the king, both let at a rack-rent ſix times above the real value. This rent, and ſome profit, muſt be extorted from the few travellers that call there. One is apt to conclude, *que le mal eſt ſans remède.* Who can be expected to have any regard for the good of ſociety, if the firſt characters in it can do theſe things?

The preſent prime miniſter has, it ſeems, undertaken the roads too; we ſhall ſoon ſee with what ſucceſs. He has already, as is uſual here, raiſed the public hopes too high.

I hear he talks of depending partly on tolls, which will be diſtreſſing and ineffectual, where there are few travellers, and ſo little internal commerce: but, I think, he may probably have the ſenſe to be contented with mediocrity, and may then ſucceed better than any of his predeceſſors.

We now go on towards *Toro* and *Aſtorga*, and there approach another noble range of mountains, which turns to the ſouth from thoſe of Aſturias, and partly divide Galicia and Portugal from Spain. Here green hills, wood, water, population, and many beauties, again appear, and ſeem doubly grateful to the ſight, ſo long wearied with naked brown plains, and ſky.

Part of theſe fine mountains is inhabited by the *Mauragatos*, who are probably ſome remnant of a Mooriſh or mixed race. They have retained a dreſs and manners different from the other Spaniards, but not any peculiar language, as I could learn. They are very induſtrious, and join the three different profeſſions of farmer, carrier, and merchant, which anſwers well

enough for the rude ſtate of ſociety in Spain. They execute all three with a more liberal ſpirit, with more ſkill and induſtry, than uſual in this country. Their numerous cattle anſwer very well for this treble purpoſe. Tolerable farmers, they have improved and beautified ſeveral parts of theſe mountains. Rich and adventurous merchants, they are in great reputation for probity and fair dealing, buying whole cargoes at Coruña. They ſtill obſtinately retain their ancient mean dreſs, conſiſting chiefly of ſkins; and intermarry, I believe, only with each other. They may increaſe, and may improve the country ſtill more, if they can eſcape oppreſſion; but that is what cannot long be expected under this government, eſpecially if they appear to proſper. Some of them ſuffered by lending money to Philip V. Charles III. promiſed, and began to pay it, but has ſtopped ſhort at one-fifth of the debt.

There are fine and ſingular ſcenes and beauties of nature, in theſe weſtern mountains of Galicia: and they are tolerably peopled, though only by Gallegos, who

are, to be ſure, but a poor miſerable-looking race: docile, obedient, mean, and ragged creatures; ſomething like the poor Jews at Gibraltar. In theſe northern provinces, and in Catalonia, Spain might probably find coloniſts enough for their mountainous and deſert countries. Taking them by degrees, would not depopulate thoſe. Intermarrying and mixing different races, and modes of induſtry, might have ſome good effects. Here are ſeveral iron-works; and coal has been lately diſcovered in theſe mountains, but they ſay it is not of a good kind: perhaps not till they get down to the next ſtratum.

There are ſome tolerably good wines produced on the internal hills of this range, as about Toro, &c. Spain might have great variety of excellent wines. They are ſurely improvable, being generally ſtrong, with a good body, and ſome have already a fine flavour: but taſte depends much on habit. There is perhaps nothing the Spaniards could learn from their new friends, the French, of more importance than the improvement of their wines, about

which they are now as careleſs and indifferent as about every thing elſe.

Having returned by this road, and ſeen more of thoſe northern countries, I muſt dwell a little longer on this kingdom of Galicia, as they ſtyle it. I find it conſiſts perhaps rather more of mountains than of plains or vales; yet almoſt all is cultivated, or made ſome uſe of, though it might be of much more. Even in the worſt parts we find timber, water, poor cattle, and ſome ragged people. It is a country fit to produce cattle and men; and for theſe two important objects, government ſhould promote and give up other conſiderations. They could perhaps double the number of their cattle, and improve the breed, only by cultivating graſs and making hay. They might then ſalt beef for the navy, and ſend more cattle to Caſtile. They would thus ſoon increaſe their population, their milk, butter, cheeſe, tallow, hides, candles, tanneries, timber, and workmen of various kinds.

There are waſte lands ſtill in the central parts of this province. However, if the

others were peopled and cultivated as this is, Spain would ſtill be a great nation. If the great proprietors could be made to live on their eſtates, to give long leaſes, or *foros* like theſe, and ſell them when they liked, it would probably improve and aggrandiſe the nation more than all their colonies and commerce.

You muſt truſt to my judgment, and other accidents, in ſelecting a few more of my deſultory and unconnected memorandums; and firſt ſuch as occurred at St. Jago a ſecond time. It is aſtoniſhing how ſo many rich churches and convents can be ſupported in ſuch a poor country: almoſt half the ſummer as yet conſiſts of holidays, though ſeveral have been lately ſtruck out of the calendar.

We have had more things ſtolen from us, and recovered ſome in the uſual way, and have ſeen other indications of the impoſſibility of any police or juſtice in the preſent ſtate of this country. We have ſeen a large proportion of the few things recovered, go to the Confeſſor's convent for the merits of the diſcovery.—Shocking bad travelling

even

even in the beſt parts. Neither roads, inns, nor tolerable workmen in any trade, to be found; but plenty of cuſtom-houſes, and their officers, every where, to torment every paſſenger. And yet there is more ſmuggling in this country than any where elſe. Many churches, and many beggars; theſe generally go together.

Juſtice, law, and every perſon thereunto belonging, are more dreaded than the thief or aſſaſſin, who are far more favourite characters with the populace in Spain; murderers are generally aſſiſted by the people to eſcape. There is little or no police any where, except in ſome of their mercantile ports, and for which they are indebted to the ſtrangers and men of buſineſs there.

The pilgrimage to St. Jago, though much diminiſhed, ſtill occaſions great idleneſs and diſorder during ſummer. A plough here coſts about 4*s.* 6*d.*: all the work of a water-mill about 9*s.* But a cart coſts 3*l.* 10*s.* Theſe trifles will help you to judge of this nation; and for brevity, you will excuſe the comment.

There are many pleaſant green vallies, pretty well planted and cultivated, in the ſouth parts of Galicia; but very dirty brown villages, built of clay or looſe ſtones, without lime, which is a great defect in this and ſeveral other parts of Spain.

Here, the riches of the clergy have ſome good effects. We meet with ſome graſs lands, tolerable cattle, good bread and fiſh markets, and a few country houſes. The church, yet more powerful than the ſtate, has detained ſo much riches from the rapacity of government, and kept it in the country. The clergy, who will always live well, generally make a good market. But every public concern is ſhamefully neglected except the church. Yet the famous cathedral here, is but a melancholy dungeon, with all its riches and ornaments. Even the Grecian orders of architecture add little beauty in the hands of negligent and unſkilful workmen. Their ſtreets and beſt buildings are moſtly in a ruinous and dirty condition, and built in a barbarous taſte. There is ſome good Gothic architecture in an hoſpital; and ſome good

good bold Doric about St. Martin's. But the beſt thing here is their church muſic, which is frequently very fine, both as to compoſition and performance, by ſome good voices and inſtrumental performers.

In this, and in all their other univerſities, Newton, and modern philoſophy, is ſtill prohibited. Nothing can ſupplant Ariſtotle, and the ſuperſtitious fathers and doctors of the church. Some young ſtudents here narrowly eſcaped the Inquiſition by endeavouring to procure lectures on experimental philoſophy in the modern ſtyle. But there was a ragged boy lately raiſed to be a canon of the church by the king, for having ſaved the hoſt or conſecrated wafer from the fire, at the burning of a chapel.

You may have heard of the gradual decline of the different ſocieties in Spain for encouraging arts and trade, which had been eſtabliſhed in the preſent reign, with ſuch ſanguine hopes, by *los amigos del païs*. Such ſocieties have not had all the effects expected from them any where, and ſtill leſs in this country. It is plain, they have not been encouraged of late by government, notwith-

notwithſtanding its early profeſſions of protection. Some of thoſe ſocieties were inſtituted by good men, who are now moſtly dead or diſgraced, and the inſtitutions follow the fate of their founders. The few that can barely be ſaid to remain, through the influence of the clergy, who take the lead in every thing, are become the diſpenſers of ſmall premiums to little ſchoolmaſters for teaching little children their catechiſm. If the church muſt direct the opinions of men, and government only their actions, it is eaſy to foreſee which, in the end, muſt govern. How can we ſeparate things which nature has connected? We ſhould perhaps except from this general ſtate of decline, the Baſcongada ſociety, where one liberal mind creates others, and as yet ſupports his ſociety, and ſome of the uſeful arts, up to a kind of infant progreſs. Thoſe *Biſcainos* wiſh for every kind of commerce and communication with the Engliſh, but it has been hitherto rendered impracticable by means of their clergy and their Bourbon government. The Spaniards, I find, every where complain, and we all feel the want of many articles of

Engliſh

Engliſh wares, which uſed formerly to be common in Spain. They are not now nearly ſo well ſupplied from Germany, Holland, and France, as they uſed to be from England. This change in trade may be partly accounted for, from their ſecret Bourbon enmity and prohibitory laws; but we muſt ourſelves probably bear a ſhare of the blame. Are we not becoming too great and too proud for the retail buſineſs? If ſo everywhere, we are too far gone in pride and luxury, and our commercial importance will thence die away, and after ſtalking on for a time, as the ghoſt of its former greatneſs, or as a bubble ſupported on the remains of ideal power and credit, it will diſappear with theſe—let us hope not yet entirely, nor irrecoverably. The great muſt conſiſt of many littles or parts: the induſtry of œconomy and detail muſt ſtill exiſt ſomewhere, in order to ſupport our wholeſale greatneſs. Better retain as many as poſſible of thoſe leſſer component parts of trade in Engliſh hands: the retails cannot ſo well be ſupplied by the ſmall capitals, ſkill, or the intereſts of any people in theſe countries, though furniſhed

by

by all the riders or commiſſion-hunters you can ever ſpare. Your merchants, both wholeſale and retail, though only the third or fourth claſs as to importance in the ſtate, are, however, neceſſary links in this chain, and muſt come between the manufacturer and the ſtranger. By ſuch œconomical attentions, Great Britain and Ireland might yet ſupply all Europe with ſeveral articles, better and cheaper than their reſpective nations ever can. I would have at leaſt one Engliſh warehouſe, or ſtore, ſupported by our own ſubjects and capitals, in every great town in Europe. But nations, or rather their fooliſh governments, ſeem daily more bent on ſhutting each other out, and on obſtructing the communication and natural liberty of mankind throughout the world. The duties on Engliſh imports, in this and ſeveral other countries, I am told, amount often to thirty, and even forty *per cent.* which, if rigidly levied, would amount to a prohibition; towards which, indeed, our trade ſeems here gradually approaching. This miſtaken commercial jealouſy and unnatural animoſity ſeems to go on increaſing; one fooliſh prohi-

prohibition produces many more: nations retaliate their follies on each other; and we do not ſee where it all can end, unleſs in a ſtate of perpetual warfare and barbariſm once more. May not we hope, in time, to ſee wiſe miniſters teaching their nations to open their eyes to their own intereſt, and more liberally to open their trade to each other, and impart mutual aſſiſtance, wealth, and induſtry? Though this kingdom may not be the firſt to venture, if others would begin, ſhe may be obliged to follow. *Con todo il mundo guerra y paz con Inglaterra*, is one of the juſteſt of their old proverbial ſayings, though the Bourbons have now invented others of a contrary meaning. With no other country can Spain and Portugal trade with more advantage than with England.

LETTER XXVI.

The Peninſula of Spain, and its Inhabitants.

LET us look back, and take another curſory view of this peninſula before we leave it. If we conſider its ſituation, climate, ſoil, coaſt, we muſt ſee it is capable of becoming one of the firſt countries in the world, if properly governed; though in that caſe it would perhaps be too powerful, and might domineer over all the reſt. Its plains and its mountains, its ſurface and its mines, might again be made to produce moſt of the things wanted by man, and provide a ſufficient overplus to purchaſe the reſt, which is perhaps better than poſſeſſing all. Though its interior provinces contain much dry and barren land, and do not communicate well with the ſea, nor with one another, thoſe impediments of nature, though now increaſed or neglected, might be partly overcome or mitigated. Though its rivers

do

do not all carry the advantages of internal navigation far into the country, being obſtructed by currents and falls, as uſual in their paſſage through the mountains, ſome of them are navigable a conſiderable diſtance, and might be extended. It has been thought, that Old Caſtile might be made to communicate by canals with the Minho, towards ſome of its ſources, and thence with the ſea; and likewiſe through ſome vallies of the northern range of mountains, near St. Ander, or Villavicioſa; and New Caſtile, with the Guadalquivir, through ſome part of Sierra Morena; likewiſe New Caſtile, Eſtremadura, &c. by means of the Tagus and Guadiana, might perhaps in time be connected with the ſea. A great part of Aragon might be made to communicate with the Mediterranean, and inland places with each other, by means of the Ebro; and much of Andaluſia by the Guadalquivir. Theſe points are highly worthy the attention of Spain, and of being well examined by men of real ſcience and local knowledge, and not merely by French quacks. Though they cannot now think

of

of executing ſuch projects, with their preſent degree of population and kind of government, the very idea might help to improve both. Though it ſhould be doubted if the Guadiana, the Tagus, the Douro, or the Minho, could be made to carry to the ſea the produce of the provinces of Spain through which they paſs, they might, in ſome parts, furniſh the means of internal communication, and of watering the country. Theſe rivers are of eſſential ſervice to Portugal, and might be made to render ſtill more. Commerce, induſtry, and a high population, can do wonders in ſuch works. In ſome parts of Portugal, ſmall channels have already been carried far along the hills for watering the lower country: perhaps ſome of theſe might be enlarged, ſo as to form canals, and join the great rivers for inland navigation. The ſame might probably be done with thoſe we ſee cut for mill-ſtreams in the high banks or precipices along thoſe rivers, as they paſs the high country. In this ſmall way, ſome beginnings might even now be made.

You may have heard of the principal canals projected and begun in Spain having already failed in the execution, and in their funds: ſome, from the miſmanagement of French quack engineers, numbers of ſuch being always ready here to undertake every thing. The Dutch and other ſubſcribers to theſe canals muſt probably loſe their capital; and the intereſt, a burden on the king, cannot be very ſecure beyond the preſent reign. We ſaw, the year before laſt, the beginning of a canal near Palencia in Old Caſtile: but there muſt yet be ſo little there to be carried on it, only ſome ſtraw and corn, that I can eaſily believe it muſt be given up, or left unfiniſhed, as I then foretold. The Murcia canal, I hear, was found to have too little water in ſummer, and in winter too much. I have not heard what made them give up that at Zaragoza. Their hopes of watering any conſiderable extent of country by that means, muſt fail, from the ſcarcity of water when moſt wanted, and their unſkilful methods of ſupplying it. All theſe canal ſchemes, begun upon too great a ſcale for

the country, had always, to me, too much the appearance of *bubbles* and deception; as yet impracticable and inadequate both as to the means and the objects. They never will underſtand gradation and moderation in their public ſchemes.

Of the inhabitants of this country let us alſo take another ſlight view. Notwithſtanding the naked, brown, and miſerable look of theſe great plains, eſpecially during ſummer, yet animal life, in general, is perhaps of a character capable of more vigour and energy, than on the other ſide of the Pyrenees, when not depreſſed by want, indolence, or oppreſſion, which is, however, too often the caſe.

Their ſtraw and barley are probably as hearty food for cattle as our hay and corn. Though the country produces few of the comforts of life, theſe few are good of their kind. Though theſe arid waſtes may ſtrike us at firſt with a kind of horror, yet when we perceive that they produce ſuch good wine, corn, ſtraw, and cattle, though in quantities comparatively ſmall, we are gradually more reconciled even to the appearance

pearance of the country, and might probably, by habit, be brought to like it as well as the natives, and might learn, like them, to enjoy baſking and ſleeping on duſt inſtead of graſs.

I think the Spaniards are naturally a bold, a cool, a ſpirited, and clear-headed race of people: and I ſee nothing in their original character very incompatible with the progreſs of induſtry and improvement, which elſewhere ſeems natural to men in ſociety. They are ſtill capable of great activity on certain occaſions, though perhaps generally averſe to continued labour. However, I have obſerved that ſome of their tradeſmen, as ſmiths, muleteers, and others, labour hard and with continuance; and we ſhould think that others might be induced to do the ſame, by equal motives. Their ſoldiers, bull-fighters, meſſengers, are capable of great efforts occaſionally. Though the motives of neceſſity are not ſo powerful in warm climates as in cold; as the former relax and debilitate the human frame, diminiſh the neceſſity to labour, with the number of our wants, and more eaſily ſupply the re-

mainder; yet we know that human arts and induſtry have been planted and have proſpered in almoſt all climates; and hence it appears, that there are moral motives to be found ſufficient to overcome moſt of the impediments of nature.

All this leads to the uſual text and concluſion,—That theſe people might again exert themſelves, and emerge from their preſent poverty, indolence, and political inſignificance, if they were properly governed. But any reform is now become very improbable: not many of them can even be convinced that it is neceſſary, nor be made thoroughly ſenſible of their fall, and are ſtill farther from the principles on which their recovery depends. I think they may long remain nearly as they are, a ſtanding leſſon for other nations; more ſubject, from various accidents, to decline ſtill farther, than with any reaſonable hopes ever to riſe again to their former character and eminence.

The moſt intereſting parts of their hiſtory, the cauſes of their decline, have been often inveſtigated, even before Monteſquieu diſ-

played

played them in his conciſe and demonſtrative manner. I think their preſent wretched government and religion have had the greateſt ſhare in producing their preſent character, and in haſtening their downfal; perhaps we might trace the cauſes to that which gave them firſt too much of the religious, and then of the military ſpirit; and hence that of conqueſt, which, by ſucceſs, is naturally turned into rapacity, cruelty, and plunder, and at laſt exhauſting itſelf, dies by indulgence, like every other extreme of human paſſions and purſuits, leaving only the *caput mortuum* of the human character, which is here indolence and indifference, mixed up with pride and devotion.

Their colonies have not, I think, as you ſuppoſe, depopulated Spain by emigration, ſo much as by turning the attention of the people from home to diſtant objects; from uſeful arts and induſtry, to a diſpoſition for enterpriſe and adventure, and all the idleneſs of running after good luck; but a wiſe government at home would ſoon have repleniſhed all the emigrations. At a period of religious and military ardour, already

carried too far, a great object for both is discovered, which carries them still farther. From thence it is easy to trace the progress and effects of their mistaken ideas of riches, of their idleness and gradual decay. Their most pernicious emigration was, doubtless, the expulsion of the Moors and Jews by Philip II. and III., as they carried away so many useful hands and some entire trades. But that was only one of the numerous bad consequences of their broken government and fanatical religion, the primary sources of so many evils, and which may yet go on, for ages to come, to produce many more. Their religious prejudices are probably the most powerful cause of their depression, and have more extensive consequences than is generally imagined. Few subjects escape their influence: like a contagious poison, they spread through, and contaminate all that concerns mankind, raise some unexpected barrier against every alteration of importance, and keep them at enmity with half the world, and its improvements.

We know that a change of situation will often change the characters of men: and

that the worſt of our ſubjects have ſometimes been reformed, when tranſported to our colonies. A diſtance from home, new occupations, even a croſſing the line, has often been obſerved to produce ſome change in men's moral ideas, and to cancel ſome diſtinctions of conventional behaviour. A ſhipwreck, or any extreme common danger, preſently levels all ranks and diſtinctions. Hence it is obvious, that the government that could create circumſtances and occaſions, that could direct education and manners, might give men ſuch habits, and make of them what they pleaſed.

But it would be like working without materials, to attempt making a people great, without great objects and motives to exertion, both at home and abroad. Though this nation has probably been generally ſomewhat over-rated or miſtaken, and from ſituation been little known, and is of a character ſo reſpectable, and proper to favour the impoſition; yet we know they once ſtood much higher than at preſent, and produced men of characters to be admired and imitated: but that was when they had grand

national views and objects of employ, and conſtant intercourſe with Flanders, Germany, Italy; from which aroſe various incitements to exertions in arms, letters, induſtry. With a warm emulation, they then followed cloſe, and tried to keep pace with Italy in learning and taſte: and in arms they led the way, and gave law to Europe. But when they ceaſed to contend and to act with their equals and neighbours, from being exhauſted, they became ſtill more incapable of it by diſuſe: and ſince they ſhrunk within themſelves, and from falſe and impracticable ideas of independence on other nations, were engroſſed by their waſting colonies, they have dwindled away to what we ſee; have ſunk into apathy and idleneſs, and have become, of courſe, unfit for all thoſe things in which they have not been employed; and now under a government, that probably from policy keeps them down, and holds them at a diſtance from their own national affairs, there they muſt probably long remain.

We may often find ſomething in the nature of a country that will account for many

many parts of the hiſtory and character of the people. Even the geographical ſtation, independent of climate, may have a decided influence on national diſpoſitions and events. From our inſular poſition may proceed much of our character and government. The ſeparate ſituation of this peninſula may have contributed to ſuggeſt, and to indulge their ideas and habits of pride and indolence, and of a ſeparate and independent manner of political exiſtence. But for this the country is perhaps leſs adapted than moſt others; conſiſting chiefly of a few large arid plains, and ranges of mountains, which communicate badly with each other, and which were never probably internally commercial, well calculated for mutual aſſiſtance, nor very well peopled; nor productive, except upon their few rivers. Thence might be traced ſome of the cauſes of their internal diviſions; of their frequent decline, and of their falling ſo often into a dependence on other nations, as we ſee in their hiſtory; ſucceſſively on Phenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths, Saracens, and now on the French.

To keep ſuch a people up to all the energy of character and activity of induſtry, requiſite to its being a great and independent nation, and to preſerve it in a ſtate of cultivation, every human motive to exertion is probably neceſſary. Without freedom and ſecurity, arts and commerce, and a conſtant intercourſe and competition with other countries, we cannot expect them to riſe, by any means within the powers or nature of their preſent government, near to their former ſtate of greatneſs. Without freedom and good government, foreign wars and commerce, even our own iſland would probably ſoon revert to its former barbarity and political inſignificance. You know how improbable and impracticable I think their recovery, and I have perhaps already enumerated reaſons enough for that opinion; but you muſt have them as they occur. Any one who knows the people of Spain will readily conceive how very unequal the preſent race would be to execute the functions, to aſſert or maintain the rights, of their former conſtitution of government. When people arrive at certain degrees of

ſloth

ſloth and indifference, it becomes doubly difficult to find motives that have any influence with them. How can we teach him who will not learn; or improve thoſe whoſe taſte and judgment, natural and moral, are ſo vitiated as to have reverſed the order of nature? where ſome of the moſt uſeful occupations of men are diſgraceful, while that of begging, and even of aſſaſſination, are not ſo? where they have loſt their reliſh for the beauties of nature, and for the comforts of life, many preferring dirt to cleanlineſs, and indolence with want to induſtry with all its comforts and conveniencies? where moſt of the country people hate the ſight of trees, and have a diſlike to milk, greens, and the other ſimple and original kinds of food, their palates being ſpoiled by indulging the factitious taſte for garlick, onions, peppers, and high ſeaſonings? Man is the creature of habit. When, from want, oppreſſion, or indulgence, he abandons, or gets beyond the firſt ſimple feelings or inſtincts of nature, there ſeem no natural bounds or limits left to ſtop his gradually deſtroying his ſenſes, his mind, and his whole ſelf. He may

may then go on, till he learn to drink alkohol, to eat aſſa fœtida, or do miſchief, for pleaſure, till the whole animal is ſpoiled or annihilated.

The great object of deſire ſeems here a long and lazy life; whereas the ſhort and active has generally been of moſt ſervice to mankind, and more ſuited to ſociety. We may inſtance Alexander, Raphael, and many others. If the youth, at leaſt, of a country cannot be made to love activity and danger, I fear there is ſmall hope of that country. Hardly any thing ſeems now capable of exciting this people to great efforts, except their ſuperſtitious terrors, love, revenge, or a fandango. You are aware that we muſt not conclude all are ſo far ſunk in indolence and indifference; but I fear this character is general enough to conſider the others as exceptions. To ſuch a ſtate has a bad government reduced the firſt people in Europe.

LETTER XXVII.

On Government.

To Mr. A. J.

I DO not diſapprove of your indulging a little in ſpeculations upon government and politics; it may induce you to go on with hiſtory, law, travel, &c. all which lead to other uſeful reſearches. The utility of my letters and opinions will conſiſt, I hope, more in the efforts of thought and reſearch they may produce in you, than in the actual information they may contain. Nor do I wiſh to diſcourage your diſpoſition to perpetual reform and improvement, which is natural to young and ardent minds; the world will ſoon enough repreſs that zeal. I agree with you, that the art of government has long been ſtationary, and perhaps often retrograde, and might have been expected to be

be much farther advanced than we find it. When we conſider the progreſs it once made among the Greeks, we cannot eaſily account for its ſubſequent decline. Without being too ſanguine or romantic, we may be permitted to hope for degrees of political ſkill and wiſdom, and for ſome future lawgiver, more perfect than any that have been yet ſeen in the world. May we not expect, that this great art will now advance in an accelerated progreſſion, by means of England, and Engliſh America? We may now look for ſome ſyſtem that ſhall comprehend at once the principles of duration and improvement, ſo as to keep pace with the other arts. The beſt ſyſtems of government hitherto known have been like the machines that require to be wound up at certain periods: every revolution contains the ſeeds of others. We ought to look well into hiſtory, and ſee if we ſhould not firſt try to equal ſome of the ancient governments, before we pretend to ſurpaſs them. Some allege we cannot go much farther. The moſt perfect ſyſtem would doubtleſs, in the execution, ſtill favour of the imperfection of man, ſo weak a being,

being, and ſo eaſily ſpoiled by power, or any other indulgence. By perfection muſt be underſtood the beſt poſſible ſyſtem for man, with all his defects; and I think we have not yet diſcovered on what it depends: the diſcovery may require more ages of experience, and be found very ſimple at laſt.

I am inclined to believe the moſt perfect ſyſtem may be found to depend chiefly on three points: 1. On good education; 2. Equal repreſentation; and 3. Mutual control. We have, in England, ſucceeded tolerably well in the third of theſe, though not ſo well in the two former. But every man who thinks, muſt have his own ſyſtem, and we can ſeldom agree; a neceſſary evil, perhaps the moſt difficult of all to be remedied. However, to fill up part of my ſyſtem, and eſtabliſh a government that ſhould improve, inſtead of declining as uſual, I think the following conditions neceſſary. 1. A ſecurity in the form of conſtitution, that every law will be the real ſentiment of a majority of the whole community, and not of a ſmall part only. 2. I muſt have a proper diſtribution of power among perſons

and corporate bodies, ſo that they may all both aſſiſt and control each other; ſome of them changeable, and others fixed, with right rotation for the firſt, and proper limitations for both. In this diſtribution may conſiſt the ſecret of the whole ſcience of legiſlation. A right diviſion of the public labour, between corporate bodies and individuals, and which ſhould bring all the powers of both ſexes into action, might go farther than we can now even imagine. What requires ſtability or duration, ſhould depend on the contending intereſts of different numerous bodies; and what requires improvement or prompt execution, ſhould be in the hands of a few, or of individuals. Society ſeems to fall almoſt naturally into a diviſion of three claſſes; a firſt, middle, and lower; and hence the legiſlature, almoſt as naturally, into thoſe of a monarch, a ſenate, and commons by repreſentation: three powers, at leaſt, being neceſſary to preſerve a balance by mutual control. This once eſtabliſhed, all the reſt, as wiſdom, knowledge, virtue, ſeem to flow from it in courſe: public and private life, government and education,

education, will then form but one great ſchool, and will all equally contribute to produce the kinds of merit the moſt wanted: fixed and temporary laws will be well diſtinguiſhed: in ſhort, the reſult of all the beſt ſpeculations and theories upon government ſeems to demonſtrate our own to be the neareſt perfection; and perhaps we have only to remove the defects above mentioned, in education and repreſentation, in order to form the beſt government poſſible.

There will then probably be wiſdom enough to render the education of all ranks ſomewhat military; this I think indiſpenſable, and believe that no government can be laſting where the people have loſt the uſe of arms. While they retain their martial habits, it may indeed require more judgment and attention to direct them, than moſt governments are able or willing to beſtow, until they ſhall become better conſtituted, ſo as to produce the neceſſary ſkill, zeal, and aſſiduity; then the taſk becomes eaſy. A regiment is ruled with facility, a mob is ungovernable: a certain method and form

of arrangement produces a conſtant attention in the executive operations in a regiment, or a nation: the uſe of arms, and a liberal kind of diſcipline, will confer a certain dignity of mind; and the people become thence not leſs, but more capable of order, obedience, and regularity, and might therefore more ſafely be truſted with liberty, and influence enough to ſupport the exertions and the ſelf-importance ſo neceſſary even in the loweſt claſſes of a great and military nation.

Since the great improvements and diviſion of arts and labour, and their engroſſing the whole time and attention of the workmen, the people in moſt countries have readily agreed to be taxed in order to pay for their defence, in preference to the privilege of defending themſelves: they thereby gave up, at once, all their remaining ſecurity in any rights, civil or political, which will be gradually infringed by their rulers, who are no longer under the conſtant neceſſity of attending to the intereſts of a people without property or military talents, and hence without influence. Such governments

will degenerate into deſpotiſm, then inſenſibly decline, and at laſt fall a prey to the firſt free and warlike nation that may attack them in a few ſucceſſive wars: ſuch ſeems to be the circle of our policy, arts, commerce, and, in ſhort, of human nature. Your remedy of repreſentation came in good time to keep up, or rather raiſe, for a time, the importance of the people; but to ſupport it, will require more arrangements civil and military. Let us hope the martial ſpirit will ſpread and take root among us, and that a general circulating militia, in which all ſerve in their turn, will at length be eſtabliſhed, ſo as to ſupply a ſmall but well-diſciplined army, and render the people more military and more orderly.

Since you lead me into theſe matters, I know not how to leave them, though I wiſh to be conciſe. I think we are more readily inclined to reflect and talk upon government in the countries where it is worſt; and this country affords a variety of ſubjects for ſuch reflections. To make the indolent become active and induſtrious, I think their wants muſt be increaſed. In

the fineſt countries and climates, ſuch as this of Spain, where their wants are few, and thoſe few eaſily ſupplied, we find the inhabitants the moſt helpleſs and inactive. Kingdoms, however, ſeem equally doomed to periſh by the oppoſite progreſſion, firſt of an induſtrious, and then a rapacious avarice. When the love of riches has been once awakened, and ſufficiently exerciſed, it ſhould be reſtrained and regulated, and on the wiſdom of ſuch regulations much of the proſperity and duration of empires will depend. But modern governments, on the contrary, our own not excepted, are building on the foundation of pecuniary intereſt an immenſe and increaſing ſtructure, which at laſt may fall by its own weight, like that of Spain. We feed and encourage, inſtead of mitigating and diverting, the love of power and of riches, till they become enormous and uncontrolable. Though in ſome countries merit may by ſtealth creep into notice and power, it muſt in time be entirely ſacrificed to riches. The eaſy alienation and circulation of great fortunes, and the proper diviſion of large eſtates, are almoſt

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everywhere impeded, and the accumulation of them promoted, by partial and pernicious laws and cuſtoms. This is remarkably the caſe here, where a few grandees may, in time, engroſs all the great titles and eſtates of the kingdom: the duke of Alva already poſſeſſes eleven dukedoms (*ſombreros* or *grandezas*); the duke of Medina Cæli, the Conde de Altamira, &c. have each acquired ſeveral by inheritance. Through moſt part of Europe property ſeems to be getting into fewer hands, and thence more within the reach of government, which is conſequently the more inclined and enabled to become deſpotic, by combinations of the few againſt the many. There have been variations in this progreſſion, according as chance or wiſdom have directed: human knowledge and foreſight may, in ſome caſes, have had an influence on the duration and proſperity of empires. In a general tendency towards oppreſſion, though the people have often poſſeſſed the bare neceſſaries of life on no better tenure than ſo far as they could be uſeful to their oppreſſors, that tenure has gradually become, on ſome occaſions, a

tolerably good one. Luxury, by creating wants, has increaſed the demand for the labour and ingenuity of the people: it has tempted the rich to ſpend and to ſell their eſtates, and enabled the induſtrious to buy them, promoting a better diviſion and circulation of property. As far as thoſe people have been able to protect and preſerve their induſtry and their influence, by a proper temperament of freedom and ſecurity, by a wiſe and well-balanced conſtitution of government, ſo far the ſuperior fruits of their inſtuſtry have appeared, increaſed, and produced a ſpirit of ſome independence for its own ſupport. This may be called the purſe-proud ſpirit of commerce and riches; it may give riſe to improvements yet unſeen, and continue to ſwell till it burſt, and ſhare the fate of all human purſuits when not ſufficiently kept within bounds. We do not indeed ſeem clearly to have determined the merits and effects of this modern ſyſtem of induſtry and avarice, nor to have meaſured or compared it with that of the ancient ſpirit of poverty, independence, and vigour of mind: men of

books admire the latter, men of the world the former, and each laughs at the other. Though this modern ſpirit of arts and commerce ſeems capable of ſupplying the place of every thing, and almoſt of virtue itſelf, we may however be permitted to doubt of its omnipotence whenever it ſhall have the other to contend with. It was foreſeen, that Carthage, with all its riches and mercenary armies, muſt at length be overcome by the ſpirit and perſeverance of the Roman republic. The arts and ſciences cannot gain a ſituation that will enſure their own exiſtence and duration, till the art of government ſhall have made a progreſs equal to the reſt. The force of modern European nations is now computed by pounds, ſhillings, and pence; and in their contentions the richeſt generally prevail: but this may not always be the caſe. Were it not for the art of fortification, even now an army of Tartar horſe, directed by a Tamerlane or an Alexander, might, by repeated attempts, reduce Europe once more to a barbarous deſert, and bury all her arts and improvements in oblivion. After a certain progreſs

of tyranny, and the diviſion of the world again among a few overgrown and ignorant tyrants, it may require only the caprice or miſtake of ſome one of them, to prepare Europe for ſuch an event; while the ſcience and wiſdom, the virtue and intereſt, of all the reſt of mankind remain without power or influence. The carrying any ſpecious ſyſtem of policy to an extreme, ſuch as the diſuſe of fortifications and of militias, may be ſufficient to prevent or impede the efficacy of your ſuperior arts and ſtrength, and at once lay you open to ſuch a diſaſter.

I do not mean to repreſent the people in France or Spain, as in much danger from the ſpirit of commerce and luxury: benevolence would wiſh they were: they are probably paſt that period, and incapable, without more property and arrangement, of recovering their influence. In theſe governments, democracy muſt now be out of the queſtion, and the future contentions will only be between the monarchic and ariſtocratic oppreſſors. The poverty and dependence of the people are everywhere too evident: their dangers and depreſſion proceed

ceed more from feudal tyranny than commercial luxury. You know the powers and oppreſſive privileges of their nobility and clergy, though the latter are conſidered as pretty good landlords: that their eſtates do not improve ſo much as they ought, is perhaps more owing to their being too indulgent than too rigid maſters, and to their being only proprietors for life.

Some laws, like thoſe in Holland and elſewhere, that promote the diviſion of great eſtates, and facilitate this alienation, if they could be generally adopted, might obviate the dangers of thoſe too great accumulations and inequalities, without checking too much of that paſſion for riches, and the family pride, which ſometimes produce beneficial effects. Such laws might help to ſave Europe from thoſe misfortunes which we have preſumed to foreſee.

LETTER XXVIII.

Spaniſh ancient Government.—Decline.—Character.—Peculiarities.—Edicts, and want of Confidence.

To Mr. C.

St. Jago.

MANY clear-headed ſenſible men we meet with in this country belong to the law; that profeſſion ſeems to produce the moſt freedom, learning, eloquence, and the kind of knowledge chiefly wanted in this nation. From ſome of theſe, you will meet with more ſatisfactory information concerning the actual ſtate of their government and conſtitution, than you can acquire from any books; yet it may be proper to draw from both ſources. Though ſuch men cannot now be of much ſervice to a nation where both church and ſtate are againſt every reform or advancement, at ſome future

future period they may, if ſufficiently honeſt and numerous, be of infinite uſe to it. Nor do I think this nation ſo thoroughly incapable of reform as the French. If they can once be moved to ſet about a revolution upon ſyſtem, they will be found more equal to the taſk. There may be ſome hope in the tyranny and abſurdity of their government: theſe being carried to extremes in enlightened times, may create ſome regulated reſiſtance, as formerly in Flanders, and as was lately very nearly the caſe at Madrid; and this might grow into a ſyſtematic oppoſition, and produce a balanced government as in England. Unlimited power muſt, in moſt caſes, at length go irrecoverably wrong, and may then ſtrangle herſelf in her own ignorance and abſurdities: ſuch may be the fate of this, as well as of Papal and Mahomedan powers. And then it becomes of the laſt importance to have a ſufficient number of wiſe men ready with the remedy, to act with coolneſs on a pre-concerted plan, and to eſtabliſh a conſtitution that ſhall balance, ſupport, and improve itſelf. However, their ancient

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mode of government, its revolutions and decline, you are certainly right to inveſtigate from their hiſtory; and we may procure you the acquaintance of ſome who can ſhorten and direct your labour. I believe you will find their conſtitution, even at its beſt periods, to have been full of faults; the legiſlature, or *Cortes*, generally inadequate to the framing of good laws, that ſhould include the intereſts of all ranks; theſe being moſtly dictated by the crown or the nobles, amidſt the perpetual conteſts, and without any certain balance, between thoſe two powers; the third and moſt eſſential power, the people, never having been well repreſented, united and conſtituted into an independent member of the legiſlature: their modes of proceeding were never, I believe, very good, nor ſufficiently ſettled and regular. It ſeems to have been an accidental and unfiniſhed ſyſtem, with the kinds and degrees of liberty more productive of anarchy than of wiſdom or ſteady exertion. However it might have been improved, if it had laſted, and had not, like moſt other old Gothic governments, begun to decline

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and to vaniſh, before they knew well what it was, or might become. A conſtitution framed in rude and warlike times, impeded in the progreſſive changes neceſſary to make it keep pace with thoſe of manners, opinions, and property, became gradually quite unfit to contend with the effects of luxury and partial intereſts; and tyranny, in new ſhapes, advanced faſter than political knowledge and precaution, which often come too late.

You will find, that their wiſeſt and greateſt monarchs were thoſe who protected the people, and depreſſed the nobles, the moſt; taking care to have always the lower and moſt numerous claſſes on their ſide: ſuch were Alfonſo III. Ferdinand I. Alfonſo VI.; and particularly Alfonſo VIII. and Ferdinand III.; and ſtill more Ferdinand and Iſabel, the great friends of the people, under whoſe joint reign the towns, through induſtry and wealth, were growing faſt into weight and conſequence in the ſtate; ſo much that you know they formed a powerful oppoſition, and at laſt a war, againſt Charles V. who did not underſtand them or

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their conſtitution ſo well as Ferdinand. But the efforts of thoſe monarchs ſeem to us only like temporary ſhifts, without ſyſtem or foreſight. They ſeem not to have known the importance nor the methods of eſtabliſhing the third power in the ſtate, as a permanent weight in the balance againſt the nobles, which was ſo much wanted by all thoſe Spaniſh princes; a weight which you will ſee all wiſe princes ſteadily ſupport, being a much better way of managing the ariſtocratic power, than the preſent general method of oppreſſing and taxing the people in order to penſion the nobility, by which both claſſes are ſpoiled, and the nation is debilitated. Had Charles V. been wiſe enough to regulate and fix that third power in the legiſlature, inſtead of curbing, and thence gradually annihilating it, the government, and the country, might have gone on improving, and Spain would have remained ſtill the firſt and moſt powerful nation in Europe.

As our modern ſyſtem of induſtry and avarice advanced, money gradually acquired more influence over mankind; and

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at length, I ſuppoſe, all power and authority will ſtrictly follow property in whatever hands it may be found: and if a Druſus, or ſome other of the ancient independent ſpirits, were to revive, he would hardly find any road open to eminence, except that of the miſer. However, while there is any ſenſe of merit left in the world, virtues and talents will ſometimes break into notice, and may command the rich. Here, in Caſtile, you will find the *ricos homes* began ſoon to have more than their ſhare of influence in the Cortes; and afterwards, as nobles, they went on accumulating riches and power, which, in future conteſts, were ſeized by the crown through much blood and anarchy. Such has generally been, and muſt probably always be, the hiſtory of governments where the third power, or the people, are not ſupported. Might not this third power be ſo regulated and eſtabliſhed, when well ſupported by the intereſt of the crown, as to ſupply the defects and fluctuations of property, and, in ſpite of poverty, maintain the neceſſary importance

importance and influence of the people? But then you may ſay, that ſuch a ſyſtem would require a perpetual ſucceſſion of wiſe, ſcientific, and liberal monarchs; and for that purpoſe, a better kind of education would be neceſſary than it ſeems now the faſhion to give to princes.

Our Engliſh plan of repreſentation, which came in ſuch good time to ſupport a falling people, I am ſorry to ſee, is not ſo generally known and underſtood as it deſerves; and if we ſhould neglect to complete the ſyſtem, and to enſure its duration, it may, before it is perfected, ſuffer ſome unmerited diſcredit, which may prevent or retard its imitation or revival at ſome future period, for the benefit of mankind. How many things combine to retard the progreſs of the great ſcience of government! Wiſe and liberal principles are very long in gaining a footing among men, and, on certain occaſions, are all driven out again in a moment. From the time that Charles V. by force or influence in the Cortes, I believe here at St. Jago, got it eſtabliſhed

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to vote the ſupplies always before the redreſs of grievances—from that time the conſtitution was gone: the forms were preſerved, as if only to give time to convince the public, by a kind of pretended ſpecious experience, that thoſe aſſemblies were unneceſſary and burdenſome: and by the decay of finance, their diſuſe became at laſt a matter of œconomy and neceſſity; as the maintaining a majority there was attended with more difficulty and expence, than a very conſiderable increaſe of the army, which was known to anſwer that and ſeveral other purpoſes more effectually; and thus came to be gradually eſtabliſhed here, one of the moſt unlimited tyrannies in Europe. And we cannot wiſh for a better example to ſhew the effects of deſtroying and replacing an eſtabliſhed free conſtitution by an arbitrary government, than the gradual decline of this country ever ſince that period. Hardly any of their writers dare yet look up to this firſt ſource of their decline: they ſeem complaiſantly to ſhift the cauſe, and willing to place it on miſmanagement. The boldeſt trace it

to the end of Philip II.: but he only purſued the ſyſtem, and employed and exhauſted the broken conſtitution, left by his father. The reſult or accumulation of a ſucceſſion of bad management during that and the following reigns, the natural conſequence of unlimited power, ſeemed to fall with an accelerated weight upon that of Philip IV. and Charles II. They now perſiſt in expecting a complete recovery from their Bourbon government, in ſpite of the experience of near a century, and after repeated diſappointments, more than ſufficient to ſhew them the fallacy of their hopes.

It would ſeem, that abſolute governments cannot be improved by the addition of minute regulations and ſubdiviſions, and are only embarraſſed, inſtead of being tempered or directed, by an increaſe of legal forms and councils. Such governments may ſometimes be adminiſtered by good men, as this ſeems to be at preſent, and then ſome little improvements may be made. But this nation ſeems too far ſunk ever to be raiſed to any thing conſiderable by ſmall

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and temporary regulations: it is plain theſe miniſters can do little or no good: they cannot find tools to work with in the preſent ſtate of things and condition of the people; the fallacious forms and inſtitutions anſwer none of the purpoſes expected from them! Though they may pretend, or really aim at the public good, they cannot hit it; they ſoon perceive it impoſſible; then turn to follow their own intereſt, which unfortunately is not that of the nation; and the benefit of the people can, with them, only be a ſecondary conſideration at beſt. Indeed, ſubdiviſions of power ſeem to be adopted in this country only when uſeleſs or hurtful: each of the numerous departments of government is here a ſeparate and independent deſpot, with authority enough to oppreſs and do miſchief, but without either power or diſpoſition to do good. With all our chain of controls, from parliament downwards, you know how difficult it is with us to get the public buſineſs properly executed; how little each man is diſpoſed to do more than barely his duty,

and how ſubject every department is to corrupt practices, and a domineering ſpirit. Human power, and ſelf-intereſt, cannot preſcribe bounds to themſelves; theſe muſt be placed by force, neceſſity, and other hands. Government, or ſociety, ſhould be a ſyſtem of checks, or of mutual control. We might as well, in mechanics, look for a ſelf-motion that ſhould begin, continue, and end, without a cauſe, as expect from human beings the duties of ſociety without ſufficient motives and control.

Though juſtice is tardy in this country, they were going to hang a poor man directly the other day, a ſervant of the king's, for amuſing himſelf in writing letters about an imaginary conſpiracy; and his being diſcovered to be fooliſh could hardly ſave him. There are many new regulations in the palace, and new edicts on this occaſion. Many more are expected about the roads, the poor, on commerce, &c. This tyrannic and fooliſh government ſeems fonder of regulations than

than the freeſt and wiſeſt we know: it is for ever regulating the people, as if it loved them: but it is ſoon perceptible, that to impoveriſh or divide, to terrify or weaken them, is the grand object of all thoſe efforts of their wiſdom and myſtery. As it is in the nature of power to become more cautious and timid as it grows more deſpotic, and to dread and hate the people always more than they deſerve, hence that perpetual deſire which it ſhews for more and more laws and authority over them; and which, by conſidering them as worſe than they really are, by ſuppoſing them bad, ſeems purpoſely to make them ſo.

Now I think the contrary conduct has been found to ſucceed beſt with mankind: both individuals and bodies of men have been obſerved to improve, and become more worthy of confidence, by being truſted; and they may be obſerved to have proſpered in proportion to the liberty and ſecurity in which they have been left to live, and to manage their own affairs; and I believe nearly in this proportion we

ſhall actually find the powers, induſtry, the merits of all the people we know, from the laſt up to the firſt, from the miſerable African or Siberian ſlave, up to the active and independent inhabitant of Great Britain. Believe men capable of great virtues or efforts, and they will commonly exert themſelves to become ſo in reality. Many of the loweſt Spaniards may yet be ſpurred on to exert great efforts of friendſhip and liberality, by truſting them, and ſhewing a confidence in the old reputation of their honour, though they may now be far inferior to their anceſtors who gained them that reputation. A general Wolfe could perſuade, and very ſoon believe, a ſet of common fellows, of which his regiment was compoſed, to be incapable of deſertion, and they accordingly ſoon became ſo; when he had ſufficiently prepared them by his ſpeeches and orders, guards and ſentries, which had been placed in vain to prevent their eſcape, were called in, and the deſertion ceaſed. There is a diſcipline which might be eſtabliſhed through men's minds more readily

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than by the drill, but which few officers underſtand. An Alexander could ſtake his life againſt the probability of his phyſician's treachery. Such great ſpirits, capable of ſuch confidence, muſt, of courſe, form others like themſelves, and will generally be well ſerved.

LETTER XXIX.

Spaniſh Manners.—Taſte.—Paſſions.—Happineſs.—Female Character.—Miniſtry.—Princes.

To Mr. A. J.

I HEARTILY wiſh to be drawing towards a concluſion with theſe ſcattered obſervations on this nation; and yet ſhall probably go on with what remains in the ſame deſultory way I began.

The winter here, though not what you would call ſevere, yet ſadly increaſes the ſilent melancholy gloom of poverty and indolence. Thoſe who wiſh for a peaceful ſtate of ſociety, may find it now completely eſtabliſhed in Spain. Without fire or chimney, though the ſnowy mountains are juſt in ſight, people now wrap themſelves up in their gloomy cloaks and apparent miſery, and ſit whole evenings ſmoking their *ſigarros*, or praying over

their beads in ſilent melancholy reſignation, ſeemingly indifferent about every thing, till the ſun ſhall call them again into life, and to the ſummer's evening dance.

I like your queſtions concerning national diſpoſition, &c. but it requires reflection to anſwer them rightly. The high opinion I have of the Spaniſh character and behaviour *(trato)* may be rather new to you, and may differ from that of many, but it is not the leſs founded, and has been long the ſame. The contraſt between the profeſſions and the practice of friendſhip and hoſpitality, between real and affected honour and civility, is doubtleſs a very ſtriking feature in modern manners, owing I believe chiefly to France; and the Spaniards, with all their honour and ſincerity, are not entirely exempt from it. A ſemblance of virtue may be better than none: but the romantic purity of manners and principles, ſtill aſſumed by ſome, and particularly thoſe of high rank, though it may be better than nothing, yet becomes worſe than ridiculous when we come to know more of their private hiſtory.

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The habits of politeneſs, by eſtabliſhed cuſtom, may properly enough ſupply the place of real goodneſs, civility, benevolence, and many other virtues; yet when carried too far, they may become deceit: how far, is hard to ſay. It is very difficult to eſtimate virtues and vices that depend ſo much on degree and faſhion. In order to underſtand theſe things, you muſt know what they call the world; that is to ſay, the men and women of it: reading is inſufficient; you muſt travel among, and live with, all ranks and nations.

It is likewiſe very difficult to judge rightly of the taſte and predominant paſſions of men and nations, even after living much with them. If the people in this quiet nation can be ſaid to love any thing with warmth or ardour, beſides their dances and amuſements, I think it may occaſionally be, 1. Revenge. 2. Indolence. 3. Intrigue. Their hatred, which is probably ſtronger, ſeems moſt readily directed, 1. Againſt hereſy, or rather heretics; 2. Againſt the French; and 3. Againſt ſtrangers, or all the

the reſt of mankind. Civilization is properly enough meaſured by attention to ſtrangers: here, as in other countries, in the ſea-ports, and near the coaſt, they are more attentive, polite, and eaſier reconciled to foreigners, than more inland. They uſed to prefer the Engliſh to all other nations, but I fear that preference is now on the decline, and ready to change its object.

It is ſtill more difficult to eſtimate the happineſs of men or of ſocieties. If the exerciſe of the human powers, our ſciences and improvements, with all the increaſe of ideas and pleaſures which attend them, do not bring us more good than evil, more pleaſure than pain, we muſt appretiate happineſs by the degrees of ignorance, inactivity, and inſenſibility, which will lead us to conclude, with the oppreſſed and enervated Aſiatic, that non-exiſtence is the beſt of all. But if, as I believe, this is not a true but a fallacious ſtatement of the caſe; if our exiſtence and our faculties are given us to be uſed, I know of no better meaſure

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of men's happineſs than their activity, and the voluntary exertion of their powers and faculties. The more ſpirit and activity men ſhew in the diſcharge of their various duties, and the fewer they neglect, the happier they muſt be. We daily ſee that ſome object of purſuit is neceſſary to us, without which we can neither be active nor happy. It is needleſs to recal to your mind any of the numberleſs obſervations that will occur to prove this doctrine. In activity then of mind and body, more than in reſt, muſt conſiſt the happineſs of human life; and more in the activity itſelf than in the attainment of thoſe objects to which it leads. Upon this principle or ſcale, I ſhould place this nation among the leaſt happy, eſpecially in winter, and the Engliſh perhaps among the moſt happy.

Although we at preſent ſee here little elſe remaining but the ſkeleton, ſo to ſpeak, of the old Spaniſh character, pride and patience, we muſt perhaps except the female part of ſociety. The female character is probably improved, while the male may have

have declined, throughout modern Europe. The ſex improves by ſociety, even though we keep them from knowledge; and they here now poſſeſs more domeſtic, ſocial, and uſeful virtues, than formerly, when more ſecluded from the world. They were then ſubject to more indolence and timidity, to a ſlovenly indifference, and poſitive vices, and had only a few negative virtues at beſt. We now find them endowed with all the attention and goodneſs, tenderneſs and humanity, ſo becoming their ſex, and which they beſtow on all around them, except heretics, of whom many of them ſhew the greateſt dread and averſion, though ſometimes mixed with compaſſion. Several of the Spaniſh ladies are ſtill too much indulged in indolence, and ſomewhat ſpoiled by falſe delicacies and refinements; others, who have had ſenſe and reſolution to break through the reſtraints of faſhionable idleneſs, have become manly and active, and can now ride, hunt, and labour in the garden, better than many of us: and ſome Aragoneſe gentlemen, I knew, have brought up their daughters in this way.

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In ſpite of the flattery and ſelf-conceit of the times, I believe the Bourbon period of Spaniſh hiſtory will make but a poor figure in their future annals. Almoſt every thing of importance that has been attempted by that government, has hitherto failed of ſucceſs. At the Bourbon acceſſion, the exhauſted and depopulated ſtate of the country, though great, was not however beyond the powers of liberal principles and good management to re-eſtabliſh: and it is but too evident, that this jealous government, ſubject to no legal and effectual mode of influence or control from the people, has been either unable or unwilling to accompliſh the reſtoration of a kingdom perhaps naturally the rival of France.

Their preſent miniſtry ſeems to be among the moſt ſenſible and efficient that they have had for ſome time paſt, except that of the Conde de Heranda, and perhaps that of Enſenada; but they, you know, were not permitted to go on: and ſuch will probably be the future hiſtory of Spain while a province of the Bourbon empire. Whenever they begin evidently to riſe, ſome French trick or intrigue

intrigue will always be at hand to ſlip away the ladder. Some of theſe miniſters, being reputed men of buſineſs, give riſe to ſanguine hopes; too ſanguine, as uſual here: for, ſuppoſing them really zealous and ſincere in their endeavours and profeſſions, what can they do with this yet exhauſted and indolent nation, if they will not, or cannot reſtore them their conſtitution; the only effectual means, I believe, of recovery. Several of what they think very important regulations in commerce and police are beginning to be adopted, and others expected, if not all interrupted by their taking a part in this fooliſh and unfortunate war. They are going to be as great fools as ourſelves. Folly ſeems to be contagious at certain periods.

Their premier F. B. was bred to the law, and ſome time at Rome, from which it is thought he muſt know ſomething; but he has not power to do much. Others allege, that really great politicians would place him only among the little ones: that he relies too much on that left-handed wiſdom,

dom, artifice and cunning: if ſo, he employs the beſt maſk, a frank and open manner, *volto ſciolto et penſieri ſtretti*, which he probably learned at Rome. Mr. G. may know South America, but it is doubted if he knows Europe, or the true principles of commerce, or of domeſtic police and proſperity: but theſe, though the preſent favourite topics here, we cannot expect to be well underſtood in the moſt anti-commercial nation, while they are not yet well underſtood in the moſt enlightened.

But it ſeems to be again the faſhion of late, for princes to covet the reputation of being their own miniſters, ſo that it would appear to be of leſs importance who is nominally ſo: and they ſeem likewiſe inclined to employ new men, probably from a natural dread and jealouſy which abſolute monarchy muſt always have againſt ariſtocratic power. But neither of theſe ſyſtems can, I believe, anſwer the purpoſes intended. Our Engliſh ideas of the neceſſary reſponſibility of miniſters are well founded,

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in the nature of men and of princes, and indeed are openly or tacitly acknowledged almoſt everywhere: it has manifeſtly appeared here lately in the caſe of *Squilacci*; and it ſeems to be tacitly underſtood even at Conſtantinople. The greateſt miniſters have always undertaken their office on thoſe terms of reſponſibility, and have ſubmitted to them with the beſt and the boldeſt grace. The people will generally conſider miniſters as anſwerable for public meaſures. Indeed, a certain degree of reſponſibility and publicity are highly neceſſary in many public meaſures, being the only checks that remain againſt various kinds of tyranny, which, on the other hand, is always ſtruggling to get rid even of theſe, and of every other reſtraint. That of raiſing and employing new families in preference to the old and powerful, is the weak expedient of weak princes, and will generally create them more enemies than friends. The third power, the people, or democratic part, well regulated and eſtabliſhed (which a wiſe monarch can always manage and direct, ſo as to balance an

ambitious ariſtocracy), will always be a much better expedient, and anſwer the above and every other purpoſe more completely.

Princes ought undoubtedly to be equal to the taſk of adminiſtration; not that they may do the buſineſs themſelves, but only ſee it properly done by others. A general, or head of any department, ought perhaps to be capable of ſerving in any inferior ſtation in it; but it is not neceſſary, nay it is highly improper, that he ſhould do it. His duty is, to ſee that every man do his duty; to inſpect the whole, and know that every part of the machine is properly placed and employed, and the whole produces its effect: this would only be impeded by his attempting to ſupply, with his own hand, the work of any part. Great and comprehenſive minds are known by their arrangements on the great and general ſcale, and not by what they themſelves can execute in detail. On thoſe principles, examine a Roman or a Pruſſian army, an Engliſh navy, a Grecian, Roman, or Engliſh govern-

government, and you will ſee their ſtrength and ſucceſs generally depend on each part performing only its own ſhare of the work, and on its being properly and ſufficiently employed: or if any parts do more than their duty, it is by the ſucceſſive aſcending of the parts below, and not by the deſcent of thoſe above. In great plans, that require much time for completion, we muſt regret that ſucceſſors ſo ſeldom carry on the ideas of their predeceſſors, and that nature ſeems to have planted a kind of enmity between them.

Doubtleſs, in the education of princes, it cannot be too much inculcated, that there is no certain way of creating or of employing merit in its proper place, without being thoroughly and practically a judge of it; nor of avoiding impoſition, or of directing the various departments, without knowing the principles and the practice of each; nor without the great ſcience or knowledge of men.

We cannot avoid ſpeculating ſometimes thus on ſubjects perhaps above our reach.

We muſt often judge of our ſuperiors, who require the control both of private and public opinion, as well as of others; and we all require ſome.

LETTER XXX.

Situation.—Trade.—Prohibitions and high Duties.

I OBEY your commands, and go on to obſerve and reflect, ſince we cannot yet get away. But you muſt not be ſurpriſed if this naked country ſhould be found rather barren of uſeful matter, even for reflection; or if theſe letters ſhould ſavour ſtill more of their Spaniſh ſource, and turn to idle and indolent ſpeculation. Doubtleſs, there are many ſingularities to be obſerved of this nation: I wiſh to give you only the moſt important. Their ſeparate ſituation I conſider as the ſource of many of thoſe ſingularities; of their being leſs known, of their knowing leſs of the world, and of their being leſs influenced by its changes, than almoſt any other European nation. Hence manners, ſociety, arts, trades, police, are more ſtationary, and as it were left behind,

and become more the objects of curioſity. The Spaniards are, however, obliged to conform at laſt to the ſyſtem of which they are a part, and we perceive them to Philippiſe, *i. e.* to Frenchify, within the memory of man. They keep following, though at a diſtance, the errors as well as improvements of others. They have not yet gone through half the nonſenſe they are probably doomed to paſs, and with their ſlow character they will be long about it. By opening their American trade with one hand, and ſhutting it up with the other by monopolies and prohibitions, they are now only imitating the pedlar and tyrannic ſyſtems of other nations. The people and territory at home ſurely deſerve the firſt and always the greateſt attention, and any colony or trade that does not tend to improve theſe, muſt be a burden, and without ſome other balance or ſupport muſt at length bring down any nation, as it has done this. I fear moſt of our modern colonies have this tendency, chiefly owing to that graſping monopoliſing ſpirit, of confining their trade, &c. entirely to ourſelves.

Colonial

Colonial commerce has generally been over-rated: that of this country, which the nation has ſo greedily engroſſed, and by which they are more than engroſſed, to conſider it only in a pecuniary view, will never probably amount to one-tenth of the value of the bread only that they eat; and cannot promote induſtry, as they will never ſufficiently open their trade, nor allow the money to have any of its good effects, by circulating freely in and out of the country. Were they even to grant a bounty on its export, it might be better than attempting to hoard or dam it up within their dominions. But we have all been ſubject to the ſame errors. Is not there now ſome hope of our being cured of them? New events, new principles, and experience, muſt ſurely in time open our eyes. But I think nations ſeldom learn political wiſdom of each other: folly ſeems far more contagious. Perhaps it muſt be ſo; as it is not the wiſdom of age and experience that lead the faſhion, or that can always be heard amidſt the paſſions of the

young, and the intereſts of the rich and powerful.

Prohibition often ſuperadds the evils of monopoly to its own; here are many; as in cottons, to exclude thoſe of Manchester, againſt which there appears a peculiar enmity in this government, proportioned to the taſte of the people in their favour. This prohibition is now meant to favour a company of monopoliſts in Catalonia, who pretend to manufacture enough, but cannot produce one-tenth of the national demand, and they therefore ſmuggle and ſell at their own price. It would be endleſs to enumerate the evils of monopolies, prohibitions, and exceſſive duties. Other nations might ſee here many of their ruinous effects, and learn. We may ſee verified in practice, the doctrine of our friend A. Smith, *viz.* That high duties, 1. tempt to ſmuggle; 2. deſtroy men; 3. leſſen revenue; 4. ſtop or diminiſh trade; 5. employ too many hands badly; 6. ſome of whom oppreſs and tyranniſe, and help to deſtroy the ideas of juſtice; 7. all of which

which curtail the ſupply of our wants, and the increaſe of induſtry. Perfection does not lie that way. It would be better to have no duties than have them too high. They may be conſidered, at beſt, as neceſſary evils, as may alſo the wars, national animoſities, and commercial jealouſies, from which many of them proceed; thoſe wars have ſome good effects; though many bad. It would ſurely be better, on the whole, if ſociety could exiſt without thoſe evils: and if all duties were aboliſhed, nations might then communicate freely, ſupply each other's wants and knowledge, and the world would improve much faſter. Though this ſhould be romantic and impracticable with our preſent habits, debts, and expenſive governments, it may ſhow us which way we ſhould ſteer, and the nearer we can come to it the better. Hence, to leſſen our duties, and raiſe our revenues internally, in the way of exciſe, as much as poſſible, like the Dutch, muſt be the next beſt. Begin by opening your ports; ſtore all your imports duty free, till wanted for conſumption, or exportation; and avoid the inconveniencies,

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the great expence, and *faux frais* of drawbacks, officers, and other regulations: hence more trade with leſs capital. In this country, they load with duties, or prohibit any thing before they can furniſh it themſelves, and the people either ſmuggle, or learn to do without it, which prevents the growth of natural wants and induſtry, and maintains the national character of indolence and *haraganaria*.

LETTER XXXI.

Commerce.— Policy.—War.—Gibraltar.— Family Compact—Mediterranean.

To Mr. C——.

COMMERCE and political œconomy are now the faſhionable and fertile ſubjects of inquiry here, and every where: doubtleſs, they are better underſtood than formerly, and much ingenious ſpeculation, and ſome uncontroverted principles, have been produced and admitted; yet national governments are neceſſarily tardy in adopting new ſyſtems. I think they are all apt to be too cautious, like this nation: hence the very ſlow progreſs of the human ſpecies in the art of government, and in all kinds of knowledge that concerns the public. The Engliſh ſhould take the lead, and be the firſt to introduce a greater freedom of commercial intercourſe between nations than

than at preſent. Our ſuperior knowledge in theſe ſubjects entitles us to the place of leaders. But the wrangling ſpirit of oppoſition, though neceſſary in our legiſlature, is the cauſe of much delay, of a loſs of time and opportunities. We can, however, make wars and treaties, and debate them afterwards: a fine field for miniſterial wiſdom and policy. But I fear our miniſters do not always conſult proper people, and, like other men, are too much confined to the accidental circle of their own acquaintance.

But I intended to ſay ſomething more of Spaniſh politics. Spain ought certainly to remain neuter now, if ever: ſhe can never probably get into ſuch a favourable ſituation again, nor can ſhe gain ſo much by the moſt ſucceſsful war as ſhe might now by trade. In the preſent ſtate and employment of nations and their ſhips, the world will ſoon want carriers and neutral flags, and Trade would be glad of an aſylum on the extenſive coaſts of this peninſula, if its inhabitants, or rather government, knew how to receive her. By her means, if aſſiſted with a little political wiſdom, improvement

provement might perhaps be carried a little farther into this naked country. Its coaſt being the pleaſanteſt and moſt cultivated part, like a lace ſet round an old threadbare coat, might thus be made to extend its little improvements in the moſt natural way, *de proche en proche;* which might lead them to diſcover and remove ſome of the numerous impediments to the cultivation of their lands, the moſt natural ſource of arts and proſperity. At preſent, it is ſeldom attempted or thought of here, except ſometimes by a nobleman, who, being baniſhed from a dirty capital to a pleaſant country, ſets about improving his eſtate, *pour ſe déſennuyer.* Or ſometimes a rich Creol finds a little land to purchaſe, and by cultivating it, ſpreads plenty and induſtry around him, and ſhews his country the true foundation of national proſperity. But all is inſufficient to open their eyes: they go on trying to build their fabric on colonial commerce, which might conſtitute a part, though not a neceſſary part, of the future ſtructure, but can never ſerve as a good foundation.

Againſt

Againſt the probability of Spaniſh hoſtility you reaſon rightly, and your concluſion would be juſt if your premiſes were true: I will go farther, and from a nearer view of the ſtate of their country, allow that every conſideration ought to deter them from entering now into a war, probably full of many pernicious conſequences to them, by which they will give up many obvious advantages, and again ſtop every ſource and hope of improvement; without any material object in view, except the poor chance of taking Gibraltar by the tedious and expenſive operations of a blockade. As to Gibraltar, it can be of very little ſervice to them now, whatever it may be fifty years hence, in caſe of the improvement of their country, population, and commerce; the probability of which, however, you know I doubt. They might now draw more advantages from that garriſon than if it was in their own poſſeſſion: they want to bring colonies of inhabitants into Spain, and here is already a rich one without any expence: much of the money of that place might be turned into Spain, through the

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proper induſtrious channels, which would help to improve the country to a great diſtance; this it has indeed already done to a conſiderable degree, in ſpite of their ſullen, inveterate, and improvident meaſures. By ſupplying the garriſon they would increaſe their own markets, and have the place more in their power. All their expence might be a little loſs of revenue by ſmuggling, which however might be kept under, though never entirely ſuppreſſed, by themſelves; or we could ſtop it when we pleaſed, whenever their court ſhould behave with common politeneſs and good policy.

But it is in vain to expect ſuch meaſures, or half ſo much wiſdom, from ſuch a government: you ſhould recollect, that they do not reaſon as we do, and that few kingdoms are governed by the principles of their own intereſt, nor even by thoſe of common ſenſe: that happens only ſometimes where the voice of an enlightened nation can and will be heard, through their repreſentatives, in a well-conſtituted legiſlature. The paſſions, manners, prejudices, of a court, of a confeſſor, or a miſtreſs,

miſtreſs, often determine the moſt important political meaſures. I hope you likewiſe perceive, what is obvious to all the world beſide, that the Bourbon intereſt and influence will always ultimately prevail here, whatever tedious and pretended deliberations, or other maſks, may be employed. You are alſo to take into account the honeſt and obſtinate adherence of his preſent Catholic Majeſty to all his treaties, principles, and engagements; and the inveteracy of this court againſt England, now even greater than that of France. From theſe premiſes you may draw juſter concluſions concerning their future meaſures. In ſhort, this kingdom muſt probably long be as effectually governed by France as one of her own provinces. The D. de Choiſeul only concluded, by the family compact, what the courſe of events, like a ſecond nature, had long been preparing. The family intereſt, the local ſituation, all cement the connection. When Spain was reduced to a third of the population of France, and her force and induſtry to a ſtill leſs proportion, it became a natural

and eaſy matter for the ſuperior to rule. Nor is there now any probability of ſuch cauſes or events as formerly produced an Alberoni or a Riperda; nor could ſuch men find means to counteract the preſent courſe of affairs. Spain muſt be governed by France till brought nearer to an equality with that kingdom. Our firſt great object would be to raiſe her to that equality: if ſhe reſiſts, or cannot be raiſed, our next beſt is to conſider her as our natural enemy. Moſt of theſe ſhould be ſet down as fixed principles, ſome of which we may endeavour to temper and mitigate; others can only be overcome by force. Even the termination of the preſent reign cannot change the nature of things. France has not watched and directed the affairs of this kingdom during near a century, and brought them to their preſent dependent ſtate, to let the event depend on the life or opinions of any one, or of a few perſons, or any little intrigue of an old worn-out party. All the old ſtock of ſecret enmity againſt the Bourbon power is now cruſhed or worn out. Government, in extirpating the roots

of the late party againſt *Squillacci*, took occaſion to cut up thoſe of the old oppoſition. But we may fancy we ſee forming, at a diſtance, a more reſpectable party than any of theſe, a party built upon reaſon, ſcience, on the natural love of liberty and their old conſtitution. The ſame ſentiments and events may perhaps revive in Europe with ſcience and civilization, as formerly in Greece, *viz.* thoſe of political liberty, attended with the limitation or baniſhment of all their tyrants; and we ſhould hope now with leſs riſk of running into the oppoſite extremes of republicaniſm. Limiting their princes would be better than baniſhing them.

Some have imagined, that as our poſſeſſing Gibraltar has hurt the pride of Spain, this is the cauſe and the only ſubject of difference, and that its ceſſion would reſtore our friendſhip, and buy Spain off from the family compact: nothing like it; *n'en croyez rien*: the reſtitution of fifty Gibraltars could not now change the eſſentials of their ſituation, nor make them your friends, if France does not chuſe it. It is

one of the effects, but not the cauſe of our difference: and they muſt know little of the world who ſuppoſe that we ſhould have more influence over Spain without Gibraltar in hand than with it. Beſides, I believe, we are ſeconded by moſt nations in this meaſure: many of them wiſh Gibraltar to be in our hands, rather than in thoſe of Spain, who, they well know, would tyrannize and deſtroy, but never encourage a free trade through theſe ſtraits, whenever Spain poſſeſſes Gibraltar. You remember how Monſ. le D. de C. in 1766 and 1767, prematurely blabbed the ſecret, like a little trifling Frenchman, if it had not been already known, repeatedly calling thoſe ſtraits his *maſter's ſeas*, in his correſpondence with the governor of Gibraltar. And now that the alarm and jealouſy of our power muſt gradually ſubſide, even in ſpite of French artifice to keep it up, we become ſtill more fit to be poſſeſſors of that port and garriſon for the convenience of the world in general. Many of the Spaniards themſelves are pleaſed at our poſſeſſing it, on account of the trade and the hopes it affords to a

great diſtance. As to the importance of that place, it will not probably be well known till after it is loſt, or given up in ſome fooliſh negotiation. That importance will be difficult to eſtimate in England, and may produce ſome knotty queſtions whenever diſcuſſed. In order to judge, we muſt know thoſe countries well that ſurround the Mediterranean. If you do not know them yourſelf, liſten diligently to thoſe who do know them, and the trade they may produce. It is Gibraltar that now gives you moſt of your ſuperior conſequence and influence in thoſe countries: without that place, your Mediterranean paſſes, and maritime importance there, would ſoon ſink to a level with thoſe of any other diſtant nation: your national pride, as well as intereſt, muſt not admit of being yet reduced near to that level. Beſides, that place muſt now be kept for reaſons of ſtate, and of national honour and glory, which miniſters well know cannot be eſtimated in pounds, ſhillings, and pence.

From the times of ancient Greece and Rome, and perhaps long before, we know

the Mediterranean has been a moſt important commercial ſea; nature has made it of the firſt conſequence on this globe: ſixty or a hundred millions of people that ſurround and communicate with it, render its commerce and navigation of the greateſt conſequence to a maritime or commercial nation, and eſpecially to us, ſituated as we are. Now that our capitals may ſoon be more at liberty, and not ſo much engroſſed by colony commerce, which is never equally beneficial with that of competition, let us hope that ſome capital may be ſpared to the reviving of trade near home, where it is of moſt importance, and particularly in thoſe ſeas where all the ſurrounding nations rejoice to ſee the Engliſh flag, and are ſenſible of their danger of being tyranniſed over, in their trade and communication, by the Bourbon powers, if we were once excluded. The Turks, Italians, all rejoice to ſee you. Your Turkey company, becauſe they do little, muſt do more harm than good: aboliſh all ſuch commercial barbariſms. This is not a trade that requires a company. I believe there are very few branches of com-

merce that require any ſuch monopoliſing and pernicious combinations, except thoſe that deal with wild and ſavage countries, where the neceſſary ſtock and expenſive eſtabliſhments fall entirely upon one of the parties, on the civilized, and may fall ſo heavy as to require a joint ſtock company.

LETTER XXXII.

Spaniſh Charity and Poor.—Spirit of Power, of Control, and of Government.

SINCE we cannot yet leave Spain, I ſhall go on with a few more obſervations and reflections. The great number of poor, and of charitable prelates and convents, which are generally found together, being among the ſtriking features of this ſtate of ſociety, as formerly with us, we have opportunities of ſeeing all the good and evil of theſe old inſtitutions. I do not think their charity deſerves the name of virtue, either from its motives or effects; the love of God, or fear of the devil, and not the benefit of the people, or of the public, being their motive and object; and in the way it is managed, becomes certainly a political evil, and one of the worſt parts of their very bad police. Their clergy are the moſt improper to have charge of the

poor: they cannot employ them; they only maintain them in idleneſs, and promote the trade of begging, which is become almoſt creditable in Spain and Portugal, and often very inſolent. The remedy is doubtleſs difficult, like that of every eſtabliſhed abuſe: if thoſe charities were to ceaſe, numbers would be diſtreſſed; half their poor would ſtarve: if in ſome other country, the other half might find means to work and live, but it is doubtful if they could here do either: their increaſe is an evil ſo glaring and diſtreſſing as to call loudly for redreſs even in this nation, where all redreſs is ſo often reduced to patience. The ſtate is repeatedly looked up to for relief, but in vain; though the ſtate is not ſo wiſely conſtituted as to care, or be much intereſted in ſuch matters, nor in the event of their own or of any other meaſures, yet it is too jealous of power to give up the buſineſs to provincial or other management fitter for the taſk, as often propoſed: they always pretend to be preparing ſome effectual regulations. Such is the nature of theſe governments; half the nation might beg or

ſtarve

ſtarve before they would relinquiſh the ſmalleſt article of apparent power. Their *hoſpicios*, and ſchools of induſtry, are already on the decline before they are well begun. Government cannot execute the detail of ſuch buſineſs: it can only at beſt prevent evil, but can ſeldom do poſitive good: it may puniſh, but can ſeldom reward, with juſtice or effect.

We have more inſtances here of that jealous ſpirit of power, of its increaſing as the cauſes for it diminiſh, and gradually, as it overcomes all oppoſition, of its becoming more timid and cautious. We ſee it in the detention of the nobility at court without neceſſity, and evidently againſt the intereſt of the country; in the diviſion of offices and claſſes of people, in fomenting a certain deleterious ſpirit of jealous diſtinction, in the true tyrannic or Mooriſh ſtyle; in the aſſumption of the municipal government, and management of every fund in every townſhip, by which their towns are become naſty ruinous places, without police, or any poſſibility of it. Theſe meaſures, together with the example of moſt men in public employ,

employ, are more than ſufficient to baniſh all public ſpirit and motives of union, while thoſe of diſcord reign with effect. The church, the military and naval departments, thoſe of finance and law, ſtrangers, towns and diſtricts, trades and profeſſions, have each their diſtinct claſs and ſyſtem of laws and regulations, their different judges, courts, and methods of proceeding and appeal. Theſe bodies thence become inveterate enemies and watchful ſpies on each other, and exhibit ſociety as if its component parts were intended to injure and impede inſtead of aſſiſting one another: the profeſſed intention of order and regularity is conſtantly defeated, and the more probable one of diſunion and contention promoted.

It might be amuſing to trace how this feeble and timid policy has grown up among our modern governments. In the reſearch we ſhould probably be carried as high as the diſſolution or decline of the Roman empire. From the time that Conſtantine choſe to regulate away all the remains of the ancient ſimplicity of Roman police, which favoured the union of different

ferent talents in the ſame perſon, and united the different parts of ſociety to the whole and to one another; and when Theodoſius completed the ſyſtem, and introduced the inquiſitorial ſpirit of orthodoxy and perſecution; the motives and principles of enmity were then increaſed, and whole claſſes of people became incorporated bodies of jealous enemies, inſpired with ſecret mutual animoſity.

If a being whoſe reaſon could always direct his paſſions and govern his actions, were to come among men to ſet them right, of all the human paſſions he would be moſt aſtoniſhed and baffled with that of the univerſal love of power, ever blindly bent, in ſpite of all experience, on devouring all within its reach, and at laſt even itſelf, together with thoſe it might mean to ſave: though often aſſumed at firſt with the moſt benevolent intentions towards mankind, its very kindneſs only tends at laſt to ſqueeze them to death. Societies, or bodies of men, are equally ſubject to this paſſion. We all require ſome control, and he that pretends to

to require none, is certainly not the moſt to be truſted.

To bridle or regulate this paſſion has always been one of the chief objects of civil government, and the moſt difficult taſk with the wiſeſt lawgivers. Our own limited monarchy, profeſſing to adopt a complete ſyſtem of mutual checks to control every abuſe of power and art of impoſition, has appeared ſometimes to bid the faireſt for ſucceſs. We might approach ſtill nearer to perfection, if we could complete our profeſſed ſyſtem, and form a legiſlature that ſhould entirely include and balance the different intereſts of every claſs, and perfect the component parts already ſo wiſely ſeparated and diſpoſed into legiſlative, executive, and judicial powers; if we could arrange and ſimplify as we go on; ſyſtematize and abbreviate our huge and increaſing code, inſtead of annually heaping ſuch multitudes of needleſs and contradictory laws on each other. You ſee in our own hiſtory, how often all the complicated ſyſtems of precaution againſt this paſſion for power

have

have been defeated and worn out. From ſuch repeated experience we might expect to be politically wiſer than we appear to be. Our laſt revolution is, of courſe, the moſt intereſting to us, but all its tendency and effects ſeem not yet to be well underſtood and inveſtigated. As it was rather hurried and incomplete, we might hope to ſee it gradually improved, and that we ſhould not be ſo overcautious in admitting of real improvements. I know many of you think human nature and human government are not capable of much higher perfection. To limit human hopes and ideas of perfection, would not produce ſtability, but a retrogradation. We were born for action, and muſt ever be going either backward or forward. Better always be aiming at perfection, at the riſk of going wrong ſometimes, than ſtand ſtill. A ſtate of perpetual tranquillity was not made for man, and may be as dangerous as the contrary extreme, and more hurtful to the human character. Every ſyſtem of civil government, formed for the purpoſes of equal juſtice and ſufficient liberty, muſt be more complicated

and

and troubleſome than ſimple deſpotiſm; and the conſtant trouble and attention it requires, muſt be part of the price to be paid for it: and might not ſome of the trouble be beſtowed on ſimplifying and abridging the laws? It were to be wiſhed you had more gentlemen lawyers in your Houſe, to help to keep thoſe of the profeſſion to order, and attentive to the moſt neceſſary objects of legiſlation, though their buſineſs, and their numbers, might be thereby diminiſhed.

I can grant you, that we may ſometimes be at a loſs to determine between the advantages of leaving mankind free to find their own political happineſs with the riſk of going wrong, and that of forcing them to their own good. In the one way, we ſee them become languid, weak, and indolent, in proportion as they are guided by force, though for their own benefit: and in the other, though all their powers increaſe by exerciſe, various impediments to the uſe of theſe powers ſeem to increaſe with them. The one mode as it were deprives us of our natural ſtrength, and the other impedes the uſe of it when acquired. The ill-united

Provinces

Provinces began to form a government, at the time they revolted from Spain, and have not yet been able to get half through the buſineſs. The American colonies may be at leaſt as long in accompliſhing the ſame, unleſs they ſubmit a little, and with more temper, to be aſſiſted in it, by us their old friends. How many improvements are yet wanting in our own government, becauſe impeded by the tormenting, though neceſſary vigilance of parties, miſchievouſly watching and oppoſing each other? But as in religion, it may be ſaid, that thoſe evils proceed from the abuſe of liberty, and not from the right uſe of it; and may not be adherent to liberty itſelf, but to the want of ſome arrangement neceſſary to complete the ſyſtem; if the good and evil of theſe two modes of government ſhould appear nearly equal, the activity and exertion required, and hence acquired in that of the moſt freedom, would turn the ſcale in its favour. But though men are eaſier led than driven, moſt of them may require a little of both; and as nothing is perfect, we muſt be contented with as great a portion of the good

as we can. To govern mankind, there muſt be a ſufficiency of power placed ſomewhere, even at the riſk of its poſſeſſors turning ſome of it to their own advantage, and paying themſelves for their trouble: and perhaps we can only check and curtail, but cannot entirely obviate all ſuch abuſes, by the proper choice and control of thoſe in power; though, for that purpoſe, it is perhaps better that we, the governed, retain the control than the choice of thoſe executive men. This ſpeculative kind of politics ſeems productive of endleſs ſtrings of reflections. Indebted to yours for their production, I more freely venture to tranſmit them, as they belong to ſubjects of your preſent and future inquiry, as a traveller and a ſenator, and they may furniſh matter and motives to think, as effectually as more regular and elaborate diſquiſitions: they at leaſt ſerve to amuſe, *pendant que le monde ira ſon train.* But as I cannot give you all the reflections that occur, the choice is ſtill difficult.

I am glad to find we ſo nearly agree in our ideas of education as well as politics. There

There remains yet much to be done by abridging and ſhortening the way to knowledge, by which the ſame efforts would certainly carry us much quicker and farther on our journey thither. On this principle it is that algebra has ſo greatly accelerated the progreſs of the mathematical ſciences, by bringing many objects and ideas into one view, and thence facilitating the compariſon, the reaſonings, and concluſions. Though we cannot put the Iliad into a nut-ſhell, yet in many ſubjects, by retaining only the eſſentials, and bringing thoſe nearer together, the conſequent reduction of the immenſe number of volumes and objects of reſearch that now oppreſs the inquiſitive mind with deſpair, would be of vaſt ſervice to the world.

I am, perhaps, more ſatisfied than pleaſed to find, that you become ſenſible of the difficulties of reforming the world, which is a ſymptom of a mind improving into manhood: for moſt young men are warm and zealous for total reformations, and are apt to go too faſt and too far; while the aged are too cautious, and aware of the

danger of every innovation: ſo that youth and age ſhould be claſſed in a way to aſſiſt and correct each other; the one for counſel, and the other for action; and in the choice of men for different purpoſes, their years as well as character muſt be conſidered. How to alter and improve, by any human wiſdom, the character of a whole people or nation, is yet a ſecret, as you obſerve; and can only be done by time and events, which gradually change the temper of the mind, almoſt independent of human endeavours. Sudden changes are ſeldom deſirable. It is gradation that makes them both pleaſant and poſſible. Perhaps improvements are more uſeful and acceptable, for paſſing through a certain progreſſion of ſteps and errors, analogous to the common march of the human mind.

Hardly any of our actual conſtitutions of government can be aſcribed to human plan or intention: accidental circumſtances, habits, and opinions, change and eſtabliſh all theſe things for us with a ſlow and imperceptible pace. It is no wonder that we ſhould ſo ſeldom foreſee enough to eſtabliſh

ſucceſsful ſyſtems for futurity, for all our ſagacity is often inſufficient to decide concerning the cauſes of ſuch events and changes as paſs under our eye. The wiſeſt men have often the majority againſt them, till it is too late to attend to their advice. Yet with all our moral *vis inertiæ*, or tendency to political ſtability, the revolutions in opinions and manners among us Europeans, are ſo quick and progreſſive, that our haſty and half-formed laws and conſtitutions are preſently left behind and out of date, or muſt conform to thoſe manners and opinions they were eſtabliſhed to direct, and muſt follow at a diſtance, inſtead of taking the lead in regulating our actions. Let us not, however, deſpair by the way, and give up the purſuit of knowledge and rational ſpeculation, becauſe at preſent diſregarded, or found inſufficient for all the purpoſes for which they were intended or acquired. Some uſes will always be found for them in the worſt of times, and human ſagacity, ſcience, and virtue, will ever be reſpected, and will bring ſelf-ſatisfaction, though otherwiſe reduced to be their own

reward. Nor let us expect too much from human nature or ſociety: as it advances one way, it muſt loſe ground another: as men improve in knowledge and refinement, patriotiſm and public virtue muſt diminiſh: as arts and wants increaſe, time and labour become of greater value, till at length there is little or none to ſpare for the public, which therefore cannot then be ſerved on diſintereſted principles, as none can afford to work for nothing: every thing muſt then be bartered or ſold: our time, labour, our vote or intereſt, muſt be made to turn to account. Perhaps we cannot procure arts, commerce, and improvement, on any other terms.

LETTER XXXIII.

Of Changes.—Towns.—Police.—Of Princes.

To Mr. C.

IN this country we have the advantage of a kind of living hiſtory, and may ſee the true ſpirit and tendency of the old European ſyſtems of policy and religion, from which but few nations are yet ſufficiently liberated, though ſome good beginnings have been made. You know how ſeldom collective bodies of men can be brought to act on rational principles, and that they are generally governed by previous habit and cuſtom; ſo that it is difficult to conceive how certain reforms have been brought about. Thoſe legiſlators who have appeared to ſucceed the beſt in changing or improving the manners and principles of their nations, may have been more indebted to fortune than foreſight for their ſucceſs, and

may have been led inſtead of being leaders in the crowd that was already running towards reformation. The lower the ſtate of ſociety, or condition of men, the more impracticable it becomes to raiſe or better that condition, and it can only be done by partial and gradual means. Here, government is ever attempting magnificent and impracticable improvements, inſtead of following and aſſiſting the feaſible efforts of the people. If they were only to endeavour gradually to bring the tenures of this province (Galicia) *los foros*, into general uſe throughout Spain, it might do much towards peopling and improving the country.

This nation has formerly been as much tormented with internal and civil wars as any other. The people were then obliged to reſort to certain ſituations, and live together in towns, and are ſtill retained there by habit and indolence, or want of ſufficient inducement to change; ſo that there is too large a proportion of the few people now in this peninſula, contained in a ſmall number of cities, which are ſeparated by extenſive deſerts, with a very ſcanty proportion of villages:

villages: and moſt of thoſe, except Cadiz and Barcelona, are now in a poor and ruinous ſtate, and muſt probably decline ſtill lower. To reſtore them would require more than the country can yet for a long time afford; ſuch as better artiſts, commerce, funds, freedom, and a different race of people, who ſhould know how to live in them. We are aſtoniſhed to ſee thoſe who have habitations in the country forſaking them to live in theſe dirty towns: we believe it is generally owing to the taſte and influence of the women in each family. I know only of one gentleman in this province, who has taſte and reſolution to live almoſt entirely on his eſtate in the country; but he ſuffers his wife to live in town. To improve a nation, we ought perhaps to begin with the women: they could always lead us the right way, and we know they can be taught to chuſe it. Though they generally love a town life, *es una borachera:* by ſmall indulgence at firſt, we come at laſt to drunkenneſs: yet I know many who, from better habits, occupation, and finer taſte, have ſoon learned to prefer a country

reſidence: do not imagine that the oppreſſion of the towns, by the national government ſeizing their funds, is any ſtroke of political wiſdom to drive the people to the country: thoſe meaſures are nothing more than the blind rapacity of deſpotiſm, cutting down the tree to get at the fruit. Nor would it now be eaſy to drive the people from the towns, where the few arts, trades, and neceſſaries of life are only to be found, while none have the ſpirit to encourage and produce them in the country. Every part of public police, even the manner of building, or of cleaning the ſtreets, is doubtleſs of conſequence; yet it is not neceſſary to take it out of the hands of the people, on pretence of doing it for them, the uſual method with arbitrary governments; but it would be right to put them in a condition to do it for themſelves. Government either does nothing, or when it meddles, does too much. How often might the merchant, the farmer, the parent, or tutor, ſay to ſuch governments, 'We only want to be let alone.'

I am pleaſed to find, that we at laſt agree as to the impoſſibility of reforming mankind by

by the methods uſually propoſed; and that the only influence now remaining in the world ſufficient to reſtore it, is that of its monarchs: and that by educating and forming them into what they ought to be, is the only chance you have of reforming your conſtitutions, the ſtate, and the people. But if we conſider well the difficulties attending reform, the numerous previous circumſtances to be prepared by time, ſcience, foreſight, and fortune, we ſhall judge more charitably of thoſe princes who have failed, or have declined the taſk, and may ſee why there have been ſo few Lycurguſes or Alfreds.

Some wiſe man has obſerved, that if integrity could be generally preferred, the age would mend of itſelf. But it is to be feared, the difficulties in that way too have increaſed. While you give power and influence only to property, which is the ſole merit you admit of being repreſented in your houſe, and that but inadequately, integrity and all other merits are out of the queſtion, and can hardly be ſufficiently attended to. You can thence only expect a

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government of the richeſt party, and the moſt expenſive poſſible; ſuch as get into power by their ſuperior wealth. We cannot expect the richeſt to be the moſt œconomical members; and if, in granting the revenue, any means can be found ſecretly to reimburſe them their ſhare of the taxes, they will probably be as little ſcrupulous about increaſing them, as thoſe who have nothing to tax. Thence you may ſee how difficult it is to form a legiſlature where a majority may not combine to fleece the nation, and divide the ſpoils. You poſſeſs, perhaps, the beſt ſecurities againſt it of any nation, and you ſhould therefore be watchful to preſerve and increaſe thoſe ſecurities. Were it not for the frequent tranſgreſſion of your laws, by which real merit and abilities often ſteal in among you, we ſhould loſe the ſervices of many worthy members, and might have a legiſlature very inferior and inadequate to its duty.

Something more than mere integrity may be neceſſary to reform or improve this perverſe wicked world. However, we know that integrity joined to ſcience, in a liberal

and

and amiable character, can do much; and when placed at the head of any department, thoſe qualities become contagious, and that department is infallibly advanced or reformed. We have juſt ſeen a *General Conway* at the head of the ordnance, where, on taking his ſeat, all the claſſes of that extenſive department were obſerved to exert themſelves far beyond the narrow limits of mere duty or obligation, and every branch was ſeen to improve as if by enchantment; and could he have remained, we ſhould ſoon have ſeen the whole wear a new face; we ſhould have procured what we want, in order to bring us on a footing with other military nations; ſuch as a proper *école pratique et theorique*, and a proper union of the two. Scientific military inſpectors for moſt of the practical buſineſs; a proper connection and acquaintance between the many different branches, which would remedy much ignorance and ſome diſhoneſty. Many other regulations and improvements would gradually have ariſen from that ſource, and from the joint endeavours of all; for ſuch a head can command both the

affections and abilities of all the members, whereas one of mere integrity might not be able to do either. Indeed, to do every thing effectually, and make the nation as military as it ought to be, the army, ordnance, and militia, ſhould all be under the ſame head, which ought doubtleſs to be a good one. It has been done, and we may hope to ſee it again. But as I do not pretend to teach government, I only give you hints of what is poſſible.

On theſe principles I can agree with you, that a prince of a certain great, good, and liberal character, with ſcience and aſſiduity, would be the only power in the world that could now poſſibly reform it: the reformation you want, may be leſs than that required by other nations, and may nevertheleſs be eſſential; but nothing, I believe, can procure it you, but ſuch a prince; and even he muſt be favoured by times and circumſtances. To produce thoſe together then ſhould be our great aim, if human ſagacity and endeavours could do any thing towards it. I do not like your ideas always the leſs for being romantic and improbable:

who

who knows how much our ſmall efforts may contribute to ſuch deſirable ends?

I approve much of travel, as well as ſtudy, being part of your plan in the education of your prince. The leſſons to be learned here would be few, but important—To ſee and conſider well a nation long on the decline, with the various difficulties that would attend the reforming a corrupt and weakened government and people, the ſuperior and intermediate ranks of which are found to be thoroughly depraved, and rather chuſing to ſubmit to be oppreſſed themſelves than relinquiſh the pleaſure of oppreſſing others, and where the people prefer indolence and dependence, to liberty with induſtry. The poſſibility of reforming ſuch a nation might be doubtful, and perhaps not within the power of the greateſt human perſeverance, or the longeſt life: but the attempt would ſtill be noble, would enſure applauſe, and a name for ever, and might in time ſucceed. Let a great prince, like Philip of Macedon, take care of the education of his ſucceſſor, and in a few generations much might be done: to ſee here the materials, and contemplate

template on the means of reformation, would contribute to enlighten, to inſpire, and invigorate the mind.

Great ſouls ſurmount great difficulties which were before conſidered as invincible, and they eaſily form others like themſelves: the laborious and middling ranks of men are ſeldom, as you ſuppoſe, ſo far ſpoiled and enervated as to be incapable of great, and even of virtuous exertions, when the proper motives are diſcovered and applied. On the broad baſis of the real intereſts of a whole people, may always be erected a conſtitution which would gradually ſtrengthen and improve both itſelf and them. To diſcover that intereſt, and that conſtitution, would not be the greateſt difficulty, when once cleared of the ſpeculative refinements of law and learning; the application to practice, and mode of proceeding, would be the hardeſt taſk. In every nation you may find materials to fill up your plan; keeping the one great object chiefly in view, to which all others would be relative and ſubſervient, and claim only their due proportion of time and attention. By mixing ſtudy, reſidence, and travel,

travel, in proper quantities, I think, Mr. Mentor, you could not fail of ſome degree of ſucceſs with your Telemachus. There can at leaſt be no harm in pleaſing ourſelves with the idea.

I am glad to ſee in your plan, that home is not to be neglected, but made the firſt object. That is the foundation of the whole ideal fabric. In our preſent ſtate, and former hiſtory, you will find ample materials for your purpoſe. From the time our anceſtors left the foreſts in Germany, we have had many excellent parts or pieces of a conſtitution. Theſe, properly arranged, might form a valuable collection of experimental and political wiſdom; from which might be formed an edifice that might be gradually completed by the wiſdom and experience of paſt and of future times. Our domeſtic politics, and hiſtory of the preſent day, I conſider likewiſe of importance, with whatever contempt ſuch ſtudies may be treated by ſome. Though manners and moral principles may ſeem every where on the decline, you may comfort yourſelves with not being near ſo far gone in that road

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as your neighbours. A good head would probably ſtill find members ſufficient for his purpoſe, and would create more. Nay, I think we may diſcover, in thoſe iſlands, more ſenſe and ſcience, more virtue and perſonal merits, than in many of the nations taken together.

If the idea of a conſtitution (for we have often had but little elſe, and have plumed ourſelves upon it), if that has been the cauſe of ſo much exertion and activity, and the ſource of our proſperity, what might not be expected from a real one? Its outlines are ſufficiently known, and indeed already drawn and fixed; though in ſome parts a little defaced, and in others turned from the original direction. But if only a majority of you were in earneſt, it might all be reſtored and improved, without much debate or difficulty.

Nor is there much reaſon to dread that any of your princes will prevent the real improvement of your conſtitution (though it is highly prudent to be watchful of every poſſible caſe); and ſtill leſs can I conceive, with ſome, the poſſibility of any regular

plan

plan of reducing the nation, by gradually corrupting, impoveriſhing, and dividing it; as that would be, in the end, a loſs not only of time, but of every thing valuable to themſelves, their family, friends, and people; and every real intereſt they can have, is ſo much better ſecured by the contrary conduct. Beſides, the improbability of ſucceeding in any ſuch plan againſt an informed and ſpirited nation muſt long be a ſufficient ſecurity. Their old laws, forms and habits, ſituation, accidents, their very caprices, would all operate againſt it, and might defeat it, in any ſtage of its progreſs, or even after its completion; for you know the ſpirit of liberty and reſiſtance has always revived among us iſlanders, even after periods of the meaneſt and completeſt ſubjection. In a plan of improvement and reform, a prince might likewiſe meet with great troubles and oppoſition, with powerful parties intereſted in eſtabliſhed abuſes, perhaps as much as in the other; but it is to be hoped they would be more eaſily overcome, and ſome of them might be gained. They that have power enough to do harm, can

certainly do good with it, which is always easier. Probity and virtue are ever respected in the worst of times.

The question then might be, to determine, Which is the most eligible plan, which is the noblest task? It is not exactly the choice of Hercules; for here are toils and troubles both ways; but all the pleasure is on the side of virtue. He would hardly hesitate, but must prefer the task of making himself and his nation free, happy, and great, to that of making them miserable and contemptible slaves, and himself unhappy and insecure. In some serious matters, he might reform gradually, and in others at once, by great and decisive strokes; without suddenly forcing new systems before they were sufficiently wanted and wished for, on the one hand; or creating and feeding anarchy by the tedious and pernicious contentions of jarring interests on the other.

I think you would succeed in impressing our young T. with our doctrine; the greatest difficulty would arise afterwards, particularly that of a sufficient perseverance, which I fear is not natural to high birth; to

perſiſt practically in all that ſhould be previouſly determined, in ſpite of the numerous ſurrounding temptations and opinions, ſo well calculated to lead him into other paths. Yet after all that has been alleged of the natural diſadvantages of ſituation, and of the education of princes; of the difficulties or impoſſibility of making them feel and toil like other men; might we not look for motives ſufficient for the exertions we want, and even of a more powerful nature, from other ſources ſuited to their ſtation—from honour, glory, ſentiment? May we not form a laborious, as well as a liberal mind of royal, as well as of plebeian extraction? Though affliction and neceſſity are the beſt ſchools, is there no other? or is the palace more exempt from theſe than the cottage? or is there always ſome uncommon degree of indolence, indulgence, ſome unfeeling kind of indifference, or elſe ungovernable paſſion, incident to high birth, and which muſt be conquered, before they can be on a footing with other men, and made equally fit for application? Can they never arrive at that perſeverance, and thoſe habits,

or powers of labour, capable of perſiſting throughout the completion of a great and tedious enterpriſe, and to the end of a long life? Their treatment from the cradle is generally but too well calculated to make tyrants of them, habitually and imperceptibly, without their knowing it; yet there have been many inſtances of all thoſe diſadvantages being overcome, and many princes have laboured and perſevered in great and good actions like the greateſt of other men.

I can conceive a generous and benevolent young mind, though born in a palace, to be fired with emulation at ſome of thoſe great features of truth, virtue, and public good; ſhaking off the yoke of a court, and breaking from the trifling circle of people of faſhion, who confine his views, intercept all real and great information, and fill up his time with trivial formalities, indolent pleaſures, and pernicious amuſements. Till the villanous ariſtocratic ſyſtem of bringing up princes in ignorance, luxury, or falſe ideas, is entirely abandoned, the world cannot probably advance: or unleſs their man-

ners and education really improve, and they learn gradually to comply, in ſome degree, with the growing ſpirit of reform, they may ſoon be baniſhed from moſt of the thrones in Europe, as once happened in Greece in a very ſhort time; which will be a pity, as a well limited or balanced monarchy is a better kind of government than a republic, for moſt ſituations. Monarchs ſhould try to raiſe the people, and reduce, regulate, and limit the ariſtocracies, or increaſing inequalities, every where,—to relinquiſh part of their own uſeleſs or pernicious powers, and pay great attention to the education of their children or ſucceſſors, in which they ſhould never forget that no hero or great character was ever formed without their paſſing through much toil and difficulty, hardſhip and vexation.

When your prince is once at liberty, and with the diſpoſitions that I ſuppoſe, you would find means to bring him acquainted with every claſs of people, with every part of his future dominions, with every art or ſubject of importance, and almoſt with every perſon whoſe character and opinions

were worth knowing, and which he would learn to eſtimate, as he became practically acquainted with mankind. He would then diſtinguiſh, prepare, and create real merit, for a future day; would learn to eſtimate the relative importance of objects, of men and things; to diſtinguiſh real knowledge from ſpecious pretences to it, wiſdom from cunning, the nature, force, and uſes of different human characters. He would ſee the manufactures, the produce, and nature of the different counties, &c. &c. After all this, accompanied with the ſtudy of whatever may be of real uſe and importance, by a due diviſion of time, I will ſuppoſe he would execute our plan of foreign travel, which I ſhould leave you to prepare and delineate before you ſet out.

To a warm purſuit of wiſdom and uſeful knowledge, if he ſhould fortunately join a taſte for the beautiful, which is highly probable, as theſe are connected in great minds, what ſources of pleaſure lie open to him in the ſublime and beautiful of nature; in the remains of Greece and Rome, from the beſt ages of Italy! And thence,

thence, what delightful romantic ideas and plans of what may be done, by the junction of arts and wiſe policy! I would depend on you to preſerve him from being too much taken up with any one branch or favourite purſuit; though I ſhould perhaps permit him a few leſſons, and to handle the tools in every art or trade of conſequence to men, with the greateſt of its profeſſors, whom you will generally find to be the moſt ſimple and intelligible. Almoſt every thing is ſimple, when diveſted of its quackery. What a noble object to contemplate, and to tranſmit to hiſtory—a nation, its conſtitution, its virtues, character, importance, reſtored by the prince. If Cæſar and Alexander had been as wiſe as they were great, and had imitated Solon and Lycurgus, how much better for the world! and how different it might have been now! One might run on to harangue and declaim to any length on ſuch a favourite ſubject; but you know I always wiſh to keep down the warmth and verboſity of declamation.

In your travels, you ſhould perhaps begin with the north of Europe, where the manners and virtues, the ſpirit of war, the habits of induſtry and application, are to be found, and of a kind better ſuited, and more neceſſary to us, than thoſe of the South.

LETTER XXXIV.

Rural Taſte and Improvements.—Servants. — Population.—Money, &c. — Impediments to the Riſe of Spain.

To Mr. F.

SOME more ſcattered obſervations I ſhall collect from looſe notes, and you muſt excuſe the deficiencies of order and connection. The want of taſte for a country life, and for the beauties of rural ſcenes, I conſider as a radical defect in this nation as well as in France, and which has important conſequences both on the ornamental and uſeful arts: but it is generally the caſe with a depreſſed and impoveriſhed people; as they muſt be at their eaſe before they can think of pleaſurable ſcenes, or labour long to produce them. Their blind government bids them work, and does not ſee that their hands are tied.

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As to the produce and ſtate of agriculture, I have little elſe to add to what has been already ſcattered in the letters to friends C. P. J. &c. Of the natural hiſtory, the numerous and trifling particulars I do not pretend to give you. If we could learn to be contented with eſſentials, the time, the pains required to collect and arrange them, would be more frequently beſtowed, and they might then be of more uſe than the voluminous compilations lately in faſhion, which will generally be confined to the libraries of idle curioſity and oſtentation. Suffice it to know, that Spain will produce every thing that grows in other countries under the ſame climate. Saffron, ſilk, ſugar, have been well cultivated in the ſouthern parts. Potatoes were firſt brought to Galicia from South America, and thence ſpread over Europe; but they are now generally diſliked in Spain, even by gallegos; they call them toads meat.

The ſilk buſineſs was well underſtood and practiſed by the Moors; and though it fled with them, its revival has been ſince attempted, with various, but ſmall ſucceſs,

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at Granada and Valencia. This government knows not how to encourage it, nor let it alone. Prohibiting the export as a raw material, is certainly not the beſt way to promote the produce, and taxing the trees is ſtill worſe. Under ſuch ill-judged and variable regulations, it is ſurpriſing that any part of this buſineſs ſhould yet be found in Spain.

Among other pleaſant parts of their ancient and national manners, we find the old faſhioned attachment and familiarity between maſters and ſervants, which we ſee in old plays. The great houſes are full of old domeſtics, which are conſidered as belonging to the family for life. Though they are too numerous, and too idle, and may be more indebted to the vanity than to the charity of the maſter for their ſupport; yet if he were to live more in the country on his eſtate, he might eaſily provide for them, to the benefit of all parties. They often join a little in the converſation while waiting at table, but always with great propriety; and the affability, kindneſs, familiarity, and politeneſs, with which they

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are treated by their maſters, is very pleaſing, and produces warm and laſting attachments, and other good effects on manners and morals. The great diſtance and ſuperiority we generally aſſume with our ſervants, are ſurely beyond the proper medium, conſidering our laws and manners, and breed animoſity between the different ranks in ſociety. Overweening pride and delicacy know no bounds, till checked by the good example of ſome ſenſible people of rank and faſhion, to whoſe more natural affability and humanity we muſt look up for the remedy to this evil among the middling ranks, with whom this ſpecies of fooliſh pride is more common. Perhaps there muſt be more diſtant behaviour, and jealouſy of ſuperiority, in thoſe countries where there is an animating circulation of rank and fortune, and where ſome are always treading on the heels of the rank next above them.

A gentleman of this province, lately returned from England, and who had been there before, ſays, that he does not find the Engliſh nation ſo much improved as he expected. The upper ranks he thinks more

more retired, proud, ſelfiſh, and unſocial, than formerly; forſaking their old hoſpitable and popular manners; though perhaps more refined, and extracting, as it were, the eſſence of every thing, to enjoy it among themſelves. The lower ranks he finds more ragged, drunken, debauched, at leaſt in the great towns, and not ſo cleanly as twelve and twenty years ago; but believes, that ſome of the middling ranks, and the manufacturing counties, are improved. Let us hope that part of the difference may proceed from the change that twenty years may have produced in his mind. However, the obſervations of no travellers deſerve more attention than thoſe of learned Spaniards, ſuch as he; and a few of his remarks are worth all the volumes that the French have written about us, except Voltaire. I wiſh the Spaniards in general were not quite ſo ſore, and ſo eaſily hurt with the obſervations of foreigners upon their country. Theſe from the candid and impartial may often prove beneficial. Though we may be ſometimes prejudiced and unjuſt, we cannot always be ſo.

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As to their population, exports, and other elements of political arithmetic which you want; I can add but few facts to the general ideas already mentioned, nor can I point out any certain method of obtaining them, in a country where thoſe matters are yet but little underſtood or conſidered. Campomanes can probably give you the moſt, and they may afterwards be ſomewhat corrected at their different ports among the foreign merchants. I ſuſpect not only hiſtory, but the accounts of the living; and that each country is inclined to magnify its own population, produce, &c. Thoſe of this nation are obviouſly very ſcanty, eſpecially in the central parts. The country was probably at former periods more populous. We read of 130,000 horſe at once in the field, during ſome of their wars, in which all the different nations of the peninſula were engaged. It is ſaid the population of Spain, in the time of Ferdinand and Iſabella, amounted to above twenty million; but we muſt always ſuſpect the truth of numbers given in hiſtory, and not leaſt in theirs. However, ſeveral ſpecies of timber

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and animals, certain woods and forests, many towns and villages, then known, have now disappeared. The Zebra, they say, was once common in the north of Spain, and hence the name of the Zebrera Mountains. On these subjects I am directed to consult a book, *Las Monterias del Rey D. Alonso.* Some say, the population of Spain may now be about nine millions, others eleven. We may doubt the accuracy of the methods hitherto employed to procure the true state; but their academy is taking some pains in it, and may in time succeed. The church establishments, we are told, consist of about 150,000 of both sexes, which I suspect is under the truth. Of these, 55,000 are friars, and 26,000 nuns.

As the national revenue cannot be much increased, nor can they long pursue any effectual plan of improving it, they cannot acquire much credit, nor give sufficient security for paying even the interest of their loans, beyond the life of the reigning prince. Some gremios, or corporations, have borrowed and lent money as low as two and one-

one-half *per cent.* but not to government; for their late loans, it is ſaid, will coſt them ten or twelve *per cent.* Money being the only thing plenty or cheap in the country, is at once the cauſe and effect of its poverty, and ſhews what little employment there is for it in commerce, agriculture, or any improvements. Nothing can make it plainer that Spain has imported money too faſt into into Europe, than the conſtant riſe of prices, which proceeds from their importing it faſter than the progreſs of induſtry and luxury demand: ſome little riſe and variation of price muſt doubtleſs ariſe from the increaſe and competition of the buyers; but had the Spaniards been temperate and wiſe enough to wait for the equally natural increaſe and competition of the ſellers, they might have kept prices more ſtationary, and have produced nearly the ſame effects on induſtry: there muſt probably come a time when prices will be ſtationary, from the increaſing expences of working the mines, which will limit the quantity of their produce and export.

The Spaniards have much natural eaſe and grace in whatever they do, particularly in dancing, in ſinging, and in managing the cloak, fan, *manto*, &c. A peculiar and charming character of the female face and figure appears in ſome provinces; generally brunettes, with ſparkling ſpeaking eyes, vivacity and expreſſion of the whole phyſiognomy, beyond every thing of the kind in the reſt of Europe, with a certain ſoftneſs, and yet active flexibility of make; but theſe, and other particulars, are only to be ſeen, and not explained.

Contemplating on this old and worn-down nation ſuggeſts an opinion that every government or ſociety requires certain changes or renovations from time to time, in order to correct inevitable errors; reſtore activity, and awaken men from a kind of lethargy, towards which old and declining inſtitutions have a gradual tendency. But to attempt the recovery of this nation is probably now too late. On recapitulating the numerous requiſites neceſſary to her reſtoration, we may conclude, that ſhe cannot riſe

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Contemplating on this old and worn-down nation ſuggeſts an opinion that every government or ſociety requires certain changes or renovations from time to time, in order to correct inevitable errors; reſtore activity, and awaken men from a kind of lethargy, towards which old and declining inſtitutions have a gradual tendency. But to attempt the recovery of this nation is probably now too late. On recapitulating the numerous requiſites neceſſary to her reſtoration, we may conclude, that ſhe cannot riſe

again to her former ſtrength and greatneſs till ſo many changes are brought about, as to make ſuch recovery very diſtant and improbable. She cannot certainly riſe till ſhe is freed from all ſubjection to France, and perhaps not till after ſeveral wars with her rival power; nor till her government is entirely reformed, or rather changed, and differently conſtituted on the old model with ſome improvements; nor till agriculture can flouriſh, for which purpoſe her laws of tenures and inheritance, her religion, colonies, maxims of commerce, manners, as well as government, muſt all undergo conſiderable changes; not till they have roads, inland navigation, and commerce, to pay for them; nor till their plans of finance are quite reformed, their taxes better regulated, laid, and levied, ſo as to find money and credit for public expences, for neceſſary improvements, and longer wars; and not till the *alcavala*, in particular, be totally aboliſhed. Not till the nobility live more in the country, and cultivate their eſtates, or rather parcel them out on proper leaſes, or *foros*, for

for others to cultivate, and ſell or diſpoſe of them as they pleaſe *. Not till induſtry and manufactories can find ſufficient ſecurity and encouragement; nor till their trade, laid more open and freed from hurtful reſtraints, ſhall produce to them beneficial, inſtead of pernicious effects. Not till they are better qualified for war by diſcipline, experience, induſtry, population. In ſhort, I believe nothing can reſtore her, without firſt a wiſe and free conſtitution of government, which without doubt is omnipotent. But all this is quite improbable, and almoſt out of ſight: hence it is perhaps better for you to have her as a known enemy than as a burdenſome friend; at leaſt till ſhe totally change her ſyſtem and alliances. If Spain ſhould ſeem to riſe with regard to you, it can only be by your ſinking. You might, to be ſure, both riſe together, if you could both be wiſe

* You would be ſurpriſed at the ſmallneſs of the net rental of ſome of the very extenſive eſtates in this country. If you had only temporary ſervants and ſtewards, inſtead of rich farmers, with long leaſes, on your eſtates, you would probably ſoon receive as little rent from them as they do here from theſe, and your iſland would become a deſert, occupied only by ſome dirty towns, like this peninſula.

enough to become more closely united, new-model their wretched government, and reciprocally communicate the numerous advantages, commercial and political, of which your respective countries are capable. No two nations can be much better situated for such mutual benefits and assistance, and for the closest connections. The produce of the one country, and the manufactories of the other, might be made to promote and increase both to a great extent; and probably in no other way could Spain make her subjects cultivators, and increase her natural productions to so great a degree.

Had this nation been blessed with successors worthy of Ferdinand and Isabella, equal, or similar to them in wisdom and knowledge of the country and its constitution, ready to adopt the discoveries of the age as they rose, and qualified to second the dispositions which then appeared in the nation towards every species of improvement, Spain might still have been the first nation in Europe. Had Charles V. fortunately been brought up in the country, or had he only consulted Cardinal Ximenes,

and ſome others of the ſenſible and liberal Spaniards of thoſe days, he might thence have adopted or improved upon the ideas and maxims of thoſe his excellent predeceſſors: but he came full fraught with his German ideas of government, with Flemiſh and Auſtrian friends and prejudices, which in time blaſted the flowers, and even the root, of all the Spaniſh improvements, in the abolition of the then growing conſtitution of their government; and they muſt probably continue to decline till it is planted again. The reign of Ferdinand and Iſabella is the period of Spaniſh hiſtory, notwithſtanding the bigotry and errors of the times, the moſt deſerving attention. Dr. Robertſon, or ſome other of your curious and learned men, might eaſily come over here, and travel and write alternately, which is probably the beſt way to produce a hiſtory uſeful to man.

By ſo degrading a picture of the decline of Spain, you will ſee I do not mean to impeach the native national character, which, on the contrary, I reſpect and conſider as one of the firſt in the world. But

the nation is one thing, and the government another. I hope to have made it appear, that they are the beſt ſort of people, and under the worſt kind of government of any in Europe; and that the moral qualities of the Spaniards may be conſidered as the very beſt kind of materials that enter into the compoſition of the human character; but that theſe are loſt and miſmanaged by the moſt defective ſpecies of government and legiſlature that can well be deviſed, ſhort of Aſiatic deſpotiſm.

LETTER XXXV.

Military and Geographical Obſervations.—Concluſion.

To Mr. A. J.

THE few military obſervations I wiſh to give you here, I ſhall endeavour to abridge. In their military affairs, there is little remarkable: they keep following the reſt of Europe, and particularly the French, though at a diſtance; they conform at laſt, though ſo ſlowly that they are left behind. Till this reign there has been but little alteration ſince Philip V. frenchified their little army: and the few late regulations are of ſmall importance.

The people have ſtill ſome of the qualities eſſential to the formation of good troops: they are naturally brave, ſteady, temperate, patient, of ſtrong nerves, and

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very fit for perſevering enterpriſe: but perhaps cruel, vindictive, violent, when under the influence of ſtrong paſſions, to which they are ſubject with all their apparent plegma: ſo that the *fort* of their character is not perhaps now ſo *à-propos* to the times, nor to the preſent mode of war as it was formerly; and certain qualities which might then have been of uſe, or at leaſt of no impediment, may not be now ſo well adapted to the promptitude, obedience, and activity, of modern diſcipline: at times, ſullen, indolent, proud, obſtinate, I ſhould apprehend a mutinous ſpirit on ſome important occaſions: ſo that we may doubt their ſoon making again the figure in war which they have done formerly, in other times and manners: at leaſt, not without excellent officers, an active war, and good diſcipline, which are not likely to happen ſoon; but if they ſhould happen, and their government, their population improve, their good qualities would be ſeen to predominate, and they might again become the firſt troops in the world. Their horſe might ſoon be made excellent, if well

appointed

appointed and commanded: they would make up in velocity what they want in weight, and might be the firſt and moſt uſeful cavalry in Europe. But their fine breed of horſes has declined, and cannot, I believe, be well reſtored, but with agriculture and the other arts.

They have attempted a method and regularity in recruiting their army, which, with ſome improvement, might anſwer better for us than for them, viz. each corps to be recruited from the province or diſtrict from whence it is named, and each fifth man taken when wanted. If they were to be more frequently quartered in their reſpective diſtricts, and a certain local *eſprit de corps*, and a connection kept up, it might have more good effects, and fewer bad. With us, while under parliamentary and provincial control, and if directed by a really military government; the whole body of the people formed into a militia, which ſhould ſupply the army with men for five or ſeven years ſervice each; the army to be employed in peace on uſeful public works; ſuch an eſtabliſhment might make us a mi-

litary

litary nation. Though their army here, and this mode of recruiting, tend to depopulate the country which can ill bear it, and to deſtroy induſtry where there is already ſo little, theſe defects would ſoon be ſupplied by a good government: but that ſource, and all others, are here deficient.

From the two oppoſite extremities of this kingdom, Catalonia and theſe northern provinces, might be formed excellent regiments: but you know they have had no wars of late ſufficient to form troops, and can have but few great officers: thoſe who ſerved in Italy are moſtly worn out; and we may doubt of their having now among them much of that military enthuſiaſm and activity of mind neceſſary to produce more. We know they have ſtill, among the field officers, ſome military ſpirits, like moſt other nations; but it would require a war of ſome length and action to form a ſufficient number.

War, if it could be well regulated, and kept within bounds, ſeems neceſſary to a nation at certain intervals; were it only to call forth ſome exertions in our nature, which are otherwiſe loſt, and to prevent the increaſing

increaſing evil effects of luxury, civiliz-ation, and repoſe, which gradually lead to timid indolent habits, to a ſhameleſs dread of death, and at laſt, of every trifling danger and inconvenience. War is likewiſe ſo much leſs tremendous in fact, than to the fancy, that it ought perhaps to be ſeen ſometimes by nations, and frequently by all the individuals of the profeſſion: to them both practice and ſcience are ne-ceſſary. Theory, without experience, can never ſuffice to form a great officer, though the only foundation on which ſuch an im-portant character can be eſtabliſhed.

A whole nation formed to war, and another with only an army ſo formed, would be found very different in ſtrength, dignity, and exertion: but few ſeem yet to conſider theſe things properly, except the Swiſs. I ſuppoſe nothing but actual in-vaſion can ever prevail on us iſlanders to regulate ourſelves for war. We feel ſo ſe-cure, ſurrounded by the ſea, and depending on the precarious defence of fleets, that we are apt to relax into military negligence during peace: hence our wars become ſo expenſive,

expenſive, and ſo badly managed, eſpecially at the beginning; and hence ſo few great officers have been or can be produced among us.

Moſt modern governments have imbibed a timid and jealous policy, and dread granting to the people military arms and regulations, which would have ſo many beneficial effects on manners, police, and render them ſo much more orderly and manageable; and not more, but leſs dangerous to the ſtate or public—to themſelves. Since the people, in moſt countries, have been diſarmed, under the inſidious idea of enjoying their eaſe, and only paying for their defence, and have been thereby delivered over defenceleſs into the power of their defenders, who thence become a ſeparate, and the worſt, part of ſociety, the beſt government will be known by reſtoring to the people their importance, with the uſe of their arms, and regulating them accordingly. If their time be now totally filled up in ſupporting life by ſupplying the luxuries of the great, and the follies of the ſtate, let them lay their arms by their ſide, till they can

find time to learn their uſe, which their governments, when wiſe, will ſoon find for them; and will thereby prevent war.

I can conceive a corps or little army, when not too excluſively military, as in time of peace, to be ſo conſtituted as to form a tolerable model for civil ſociety. Civil and military inſtitutions ſhould be brought nearer and more ſimilar to each other: both are improved by attending to the ſmaller diviſions of men, as to ſquads, meſſes, tithings, as wiſely done of old by Alfred, and lately by the beſt officers. The failure and defects of the feudal ſyſtem ſhould not diſcourage us from attempting other ſimilar inſtitutions with improvements: as that of a general circulating militia, from which a ſmall but active ſtanding army might be conſtantly ſupplied; and by the men returning frequently into ſociety, the true military ſpirit might be retained. In the ſubdiviſions and eſtabliſhment of an army, ſomething like the Roman legion we ſhould conſider as the beſt pattern; and we ſhould give thoſe principles a fair trial before we attempt to improve upon them. Our preſent

ſent corps or regiments, are certainly too ſmall and helpleſs little handfuls of men, with few reſources. In ſome of the military colonies of the Romans, was probably eſtabliſhed the proper junction of the civil and military life: the detail of ſome of theſe might be well worth the inveſtigation *.

If you will not all learn as you ought, to fight by land, it is to be wiſhed you would be attentive to the conſtant improvement of your navy. You ſeemed there, for a while, to forget that every thing is progreſſive and nothing ſtationary in this world. Your navy ſhould be always improving, always reſpectable, and in great readineſs, even during peace; with 10,000 marines at leaſt, or a portion of your ſeamen, commanded and well diſciplined, by your ſea officers, who would thence become more military. You ſhould likewiſe eſtabliſh the beſt poſſible ſchools for conſtruction,

* It is hoped our good friend General Melville will favour the world with an account of ſome of the many curious and important parts of the Roman methods and inſtitutions, which he has diſcovered with ſuch great pains and ingenuity.

where

where all theory and mathematics ſhould be taught and rendered more common, in addition to your already excellent practical knowledge: and from thence, ſhould be appointed ſome good engineers for your ports and dock-yards. Your warrant officers likewiſe, maſters, gunners, ſchoolmaſters, in great numbers, ſhould be kept up and employed, and nurſeries of ſuch men provided, during peace. Though every thing cannot be kept in readineſs for war, at the public expence, the ſources whence they are to proceed ſhould ſurely be attended to, and ſome proviſion be made of the moſt neceſſary parts before they are wanted, as a foundation to build upon.

Though Spain, among many other advantages of ſituation, is defended by an excellent land frontier, the Pyrenées; yet it has now many weak ſides, and is even comparatively weak on this its ſtrongeſt ſide. Their friends, the French, being in poſſeſſion of the principal paſſes, they are reduced to means of defence which would be quite inſufficient, eſpecially with their naval inferiority. Their preſent frontier places, as Figueras, Fontarabia, &c. might

be eaſily maſked, and left behind without much riſk, by an army from France, as it could ſo readily be ſupplied by ſea, ſometimes by a voyage only of a few leagues. The weakneſſes of their three principal king's ports, they are at great pains to conceal by ſuch ſupercilious precautions, as are quite unuſual, and incompatible with common commercial intercourſe. But they will probably yet long remain the moſt anti-commercial nation in Europe, and their public councils continue to counteract all the advantages for trade and proſperity, which nature has ſo laviſhly beſtowed on the country. Even their beſt maxims and regulations now in meditation, civil, eccleſiaſtical, commercial, &c. will prove, I doubt, only ſo many attempts to reconcile irreconcilable contradictions, while the government remains of ſo bad a model and conſtruction. I may be miſtaken; but the more I contemplate on this nation, the more I am convinced it can never riſe again, but by a cloſer connection with England.

Many more reaſons, for ſome of theſe perhaps bold, though well conſidered, opinions

opinions might be found than I have yet alleged to you; but as we are not attempting to open their eyes, which would be difficult, and yours do not want it, I ſhall not trouble you, nor myſelf, any longer with ſuch ſpeculations.

From the memorandums of other various journies through other parts of Spain, little more appears fit to be tranſmitted in this way. I am ſorry to find ſome late excurſions not near ſo agreeable as ſuch uſed formerly to be, when you may remember our ſallying forth in queſt of new objects, of difficulties and adventures. A few years, and a ſmall change of circumſtances, make a great difference in a man's life, taſte, and habits. However, I think the moſt unpleaſant journey, or campaign, is generally remembered with pleaſure: the worſt parts are gilded over, or diſappear, and the pleaſant are beautified by abſence and recollection.

To acquire a general and military idea of a country, I think the rivers are the leading features firſt to be examined; and then the country between them, firſt from maps, and

then from choſen heights, obſerving, at the ſame time, the courſe of the mountains, and their paſſes. The courſe of rivers, and ranges of mountains, will thence be ſeen to divide a country commonly into a few large diſtricts, and beginning thus with general ideas or outlines, the particulars are more eaſily filled up, and a clear idea of the whole is ſooner obtained, than by attempting to be too particular at firſt; a common fault with little military minds, and many others. In whatever country you travel, you ſhould never forget your profeſſion. The *coup d'œil militaire, ou géographique*, which are ſimilar, may certainly be acquired or communicated. Frederic, I dare ſay, could readily give you ſome of his rapid and general ideas on that ſubject. I hope you will be able to ſee him before he leaves this world. He is worth going far to ſee. You may, from him, catch ideas and fire enough to laſt you a life-time, and make you a great ſoldier. But I doubt he is not ſo much of a Lycurgus as an Alexander. I often wiſh he had travelled to England, as he once intended. Yet à-propos to Alexander, I ſometimes think, that if he had

had lived to ſettle ſomewhere on the Euphrates, and had once got Ariſtotle, and others of the Greek ſages about him, he would have reformed, and got the better of his follies, and might have proved the greateſt legiſlator, as well as the greateſt general, that ever lived; and would have been the only ſovereign, from the firſt Cyrus down to the preſent time, fit to reform and improve Aſia, its people, manners, and modes of government. You ſee the immenſe importance of education. Philip was right, and muſt have had a great mind, in perceiving the conſequence of having ſuch a maſter as Ariſtotle for his ſon. But as to Germany, though fertile in great officers, I fear it is not quite the ſoil to produce great lawgivers. For that rareſt of all characters, we muſt not yet look to the north: indeed it is hard to ſay where to look for ſuch an uncommon being.

Some minds are ſynthetically, and others analytically, diſpoſed: thoſe begin naturally from general principles, and thence deſcend eaſily and rapidly through all the conſequences: the others, from particulars, creep

ſlowly up towards the general principles; and though they may not get ſo far, are often firmer and ſurer than the others as far as they go. Both are uſeful when properly employed. The one, being the moſt common, is of great and daily uſe; the other, more rarely wanted and produced, is only required on certain great occaſions, and is fitter to direct the whole than to execute a part of it. An Euclid, a Newton, a Frederic, for example, in order to examine a country, would probably go to ſome of the higher parts firſt, to acquire a general and connected idea or plan of the whole, and thence deſcend to examine particulars, by ſome ſyſtem already formed on the general view. He who knows how to diſtinguiſh and employ thoſe different talents may govern the world.

Your method of collecting the maps, publiſhed in their reſpective countries, is a very good way. I wiſh D'Anville, or ſomebody elſe, would eſtabliſh a good and laſting geographical ſchool for all the executive parts. Rivers are of ſuch conſequence in the world, that it ſhould perhaps be divided, and

its

its parts diſtinguiſhed and denominated, by them, as it is fertilized, and has probably been peopled, by their means. A map that had little more than all the ſtreams well traced, diſtinguiſhing thoſe that are dry in ſummer, together with a few ſections, would ſhew the nature of a country better than all the other parts of geographical engraving, which we take ſo much pains about, and by which we only blacken and confuſe our charts, without gaining any proportional advantage in diſtinct or uſeful ideas. By conſidering the ſtreams of my almoſt white map, wherein I can legibly mark what I pleaſe, and aſking a few queſtions of an inhabitant or traveller, we ſhall be able to gain better general notions of the riſe and make of the country, for military and other purpoſes, and much ſooner than you by all your black maps and long deſcriptions.

Think not that I tell you all of what might be obſerved of theſe countries where I paſs, or even where I reſide: I deal in generals, and do not mean to give you half even of thoſe things that can be told; and

you know there are many incommunicable ideas which you muſt take the trouble to go for, as they cannot be brought nor ſent to you; a circumſtance which travellers are not always aware of. Many obſervations I hope will here occur to you, which may have eſcaped us all. Travelling oftener on buſineſs than from curioſity, we have not always made a point of ſeeing every thing. Your method of taking memorandums of what ſhould be ſeen, is very good: but you will find, that the curioſity muſt be uncommonly powerful that lets nothing eſcape in this country. Where travelling is ſo far from agreeable, we are often more diſpoſed to proceed on our journey, than to ſtop or ſtep aſide to ſee what we are then eaſily inclined to believe may not be worth the trouble. Various diſagreeable circumſtances, peculiar to ſome parts of Spain, may be too apt to put you out of conceit with the whole of it, and interrupt that perſevering attention and good humour, ſo neceſſary to a traveller. No one can ſee every thing, and what may be neglected, becomes a conſideration of ſome importance. In the ſelection,

you

you muſt doubtleſs have recourſe to others. In our preſent ſecluded ſituation, far from friends and advice, you muſt excuſe my aſſiſting your ſelection, or attempting more particular directions, and accept of theſe few general opinions, and deciſions of a doubtful judgment; the reflections and obſervations of a paſſenger, rather than the particulars of a profeſſed traveller.

LETTERS
FROM
PORTUGAL,
TO
FRIENDS IN ENGLAND.

LETTER I.

Galicia, and North of Portugal.—Vigo.—Spaniſh Councils.—Defenſive War.—Induſtry, Taſte, Science of the Portugueſe.—Water Finders.—Frontier Coaſt.

Oporto, 1779.

WE now proceed from Galicia to Portugal, a country about which I ſhall not probably have much that is new to tell you; as, by our commerce and alliance with this nation, many of our countrymen are become pretty well acquainted with it, and you may meet with people in London, who can give you better information than myſelf

myſelf on the ſubject; ſo that a few general obſervations and reflections, as they occur, may appear to me ſufficient.

We were forced, by an exceſs of Spaniſh caution, to depart before the time we intended, and to make a circuit by the moſt difficult paths and mountains, with the children, ſometimes in litters, and at others in carts; at night, ſome wretched hovel to receive us, and which did not always afford even ſtraw to ſleep on: but children are excellent travellers; hardſhips are diverſion to them.

In the Spaniſh ſervice, the foreigners are more rigid and over-loyal than the natives. It has been remarked, that renegados are the greateſt zealots. In a country with any pretenſions to civilization, it is hardly poſſible to be treated with more rudeneſs and obduracy than we have been by one of thoſe gentlemen, a native of Ireland, who happened to command at St. Jago. However, we are indebted to him for the enjoyment of many delightful ſcenes, with which thoſe mountains in Galicia and the north of Portugal abound; frequently cut by narrow vales, little rapid ſtreams, with a variety of

trees,

trees, and ſome cottages. In the more direct road which I went before, nearer the coaſt, there are ſeveral vallies rather ſpacious and rich; as that of Padron, of Pontivedra, Tuy. Wherever you ſee a river in the map of this country, you may ſuppoſe a vale full of beauties. We found ſeveral of the poor ragged fiſhermen on that coaſt, who had been farmers, but were forced to abandon the cultivation of their lands, though their own property, becauſe they found it was only working for the king, the curate, and the convent; you may thence judge of the ſtate of agriculture, of property, church, &c.

Vigo is a ſpacious inlet of the ſea, and a noble port, and might be eaſily made much better. Its vicinity to Portugal being conſidered by the Spaniſh government as an objection to making it a king's port, is a motive ſcarcely more honourable than that of a corps of Jews, which was once formed for the Turkiſh ſervice; but when ready to march, they begged for a guard to protect them from the populace. Spain would perhaps protect herſelf, if ſhe could, by diſtance and deſolation. The over-caution of her

councils

councils has not unfrequently carried her beyond the uſual limits of political abſurdity, and ſometimes to thoſe of cruelty. Had ſhe been placed in a great continent, ſhe might probably have deſolated the countries around her for defence, like ſome other great barbarous monarchies. The ſame barbarian motive is given in this country (Portugal) for not making roads. The want of military ſcience and diſcipline is ever the ſource of timidity, and of cautions fooliſh or inadequate, like the bird that hides only its head, and thinks itſelf ſafe. As the military arts declined, men prepared for war by caſing themſelves up in armour to be ſmothered, or by ſhutting themſelves up in inacceſſible rocks and caſtles to be ſtarved. Nations have not entirely thrown off their ignorance with their armour. Only a few ſeem yet to know, that national ſtrength conſiſts in an active and moving force, and that the ſafeſt ſtate of defence is the being always in readineſs to attack. The change from the feudal militia, to the preſent mode of ſtanding armies, was ſlow and awkward. the former was given up before the other was ready; all was for a time confuſion,

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and ignorance of the true military principles. We have not probably any where adopted the beſt defenſive eſtabliſhments for our preſent manners and ſtate of ſociety. I believe I mentioned my opinion of the beſt mode of military power and defence for our country. To reconcile the oppoſing difficulties that attend the choice of ſome of the beſt of thoſe meaſures, is one of the moſt important political problems that remains yet to be ſolved by practice.

Coming from Spain, by this route, Portugal ſeems to have the advantage, at leaſt in theſe northern parts of it. Others, who come from Madrid to Liſbon, on comparing the two nations, do not, I obſerve, conceive ſuch advantageous opinions of this: but in that route they paſs through Alentejo, and ſome of the moſt barren parts of this kingdom. Here we preſently perceive marks of greater induſtry and plenty than in Spain; better markets, farmers, cattle, ploughs, ſome fences, lime and other manures; more expert carpenters and other neceſſary trades; better linen, leather, hats, more dreſs and cleanlineſs on holidays, but not in their houſes; there they are ſtill equally, or more dirty

and

and careleſs, and remarkably indifferent about beds: a Portugueſe, ſtill more than a Spaniard, is accuſtomed to ſleep any where. *Para ellos, toda la calle es cama.* But here more of the rural taſte for country houſes appears, more ſkill and induſtry in conveying water, and in the laying out and management of their grounds: and this taſte and ſtyle of improvement ſeem to be of old ſtanding, and to have been formerly better than now: there are indications of former ſcience, from which ſome of the practice ſtill remains: their hiſtory accounts for it. About the time of their great diſcoveries and eſtabliſhments in the eaſt, you know, they were a learned and enterpriſing nation, and were guided by the firſt royal family of philoſophers that the world had ſeen for a long time before: and they have probably contributed more towards the improvement of mankind than any other princes in modern hiſtory, by encouraging mathematical and nautical knowledge, and promoting a ſpirit of reſearch and diſcovery, which, from them, began to ſpread over Europe. Much ſcience and good ſenſe appear in many of their eſtabliſhments and operations, and in the

the ſpirit with which Prince Henry placed his academy at Cape St. Vincent's, in view of the ocean which he meant to explore. Their money-weights and meaſures, inſtituted then, ſhew more knowledge of true principles than is yet to be met with in any other government. Like us at preſent, they made various reſearches and experiments to diſcover an univerſal ſtandard meaſure; and after all, they wiſely followed the Greeks and Romans; as lately diſcovered by our good conſul Whitehead here, together with many other intereſting particulars concerning thoſe reſpectable princes, which we hope he will communicate to the world.

The arts generally advance together, and it appears, that agriculture then flouriſhed here with the reſt. In many places, the people are ſtill in the habits of leading water a great way, along the ſides of the hills, for the advantage of watering a great extent of country below; or ſometimes to bring it to a private houſe or eſtate. This, with their early methods of diſtributing it in towns, evince a knowledge of hydroſtatics, and of mathematical principles, which did not appear in public any where elſe for a

long time after. And there are remains of country ſeats and improvements, ſufficient to ſhew that the nobility had then a taſte for a country life, and encouraged the uſeful arts and proſperity around them.

The *water finders* form a ſeparate trade or profeſſion in this country. They pretend to poſſeſs ſuperior gifts or inſtincts, and to be a diſtinct race, and by means of a few *hocus pocus* tricks, contrive to make a great myſtery of their profeſſion. I believe it may be diſcovered by a watchful attention, pretty nearly where to dig for water, from various indications of nature; as from the make or fall of the grounds, the ſtate of vegetation, the viſible evaporation, &c.

This little kingdom poſſeſſes two very conſiderable advantages, the one for national ſtrength, and the other for commerce; its land frontier, and its ſea coaſt: the firſt is defenſible by means of ſome ſkill and exertion, and not ſo ſtrong by nature as to induce its defenders to ſleep; and the coaſt ſeems to invite the whole world to trade with them, by its ſituation, its beauties, ports, and produce.

LETTER II.

Form, &c. of Portugal.—Vegetable and animal Life.—Character.—Count La Lippe.

I INTENDED to have begun my very brief account of this country, by giving you ſome general idea of its make or form; but I find it more difficult than I expected. I believe I mentioned to you, or friend C., the coaſt of this whole peninſula being like a lace ſet round an old garment, and ſuch is probably the caſe with Africa, Arabia, and all the peninſulas and continents of the world. This coaſt, from Cape Finiſterre to Cape St. Vincent's, is however a very good and principal part of our lace. You ſee in the map the importance of its geographical ſituation; open to the great ocean where the ſhips of all nations paſs, containing the mouths, and the beſt parts of the beſt rivers of the peninſula; the countries on their banks are the moſt fertile and delightful,

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and very different from the Spaniſh plains, which thoſe rivers ſeem to water without effect; but they enrich and beautify the mountains of Portugal, and might ſtill be made to do both more effectually. To the ſouth, this country varies into larger diviſions, and more of them ſandy and barren. Moſt of Alentejo ſeems a continuation of the great Spaniſh plain of Eſtremadura or Guadiana, which interrupt a little the roughneſs and mountains of their frontier; but Sierra Morena preſently riſes again in another direction, terminating in Cape St. Vincent, its ſkirts and vallies forming the beautiful little country of Algarve. You may obſerve how the river Guadiana, turning ſuddenly to the left at Badajos, ſeems to force its way through the range of Sierra Morena, with immneſe precipices for its banks. If it had gone ſtreight forward to the ſea, ſomewhere to the ſouth of St. Ubal, as we ſhould naturally expect in following its courſe to Badajos, the great arid plains of Alentejo might have been benefited by it.

In this peninſula, there ſeem to be different climates in the ſame latitude, which is

often the caſe on our globe. The great Spaniſh plains, and the Portugueſe hills and vallies, though under the ſame parallels, ſhew ſome remarkable differences in ſoils, plants, animals, and the general characters of animal life. This is more obſervable in Indoſtan, South America, &c. Theſe Portugueſe mountains, firſt by their riſe, and then by their gradual deſcent into the Atlantic, may be ſaid at once to form the country, and to divide and defend it from Spain. If you dabble in natural hiſtory, chuſe the moſt eſſential and important parts, and leave the minutiæ to others. You cannot otherwiſe be great as a ſoldier and a ſenator, who ought to know every thing, and be engroſſed by nothing. I wiſh you to begin every ſubject ſynthetically from general principles, like Euclid, &c. Though ſome of you Engliſh affect to deſpiſe Buffon, I like his method, and his ideas.

We may now hope to know the relative heights of diſtant countries, if important, by means of barometers. At General Elliot's deſire, I have juſt been meaſuring ſome of the heights of Gibraltar by Ramſden's port-

able barometers: I believe the method may be made to anſwer generally well, by the help of Colonel Roy's corrections, which may be yet farther improved by experiment, in allowing for heat. I believe the plains of Caſtile, for example, will be found to be higher than generally thought, above the ſea, and above thoſe in France. The plain of Granada is of a conſiderable and obvious height, which might be eaſily meaſured. Here, if we conſider the length and fall of this river Douro, and that the water that now paſſes my window may come from beyond Burgos, Soria, or Avila, and, after many windings and rapids, has gone above two hundred leagues, allowing only ten feet fall *per* league, gives two thouſand feet height for the great plains of Old Caſtile. Their great height, with the nature of the ſoil and ſtrata, may be among the cauſes of their drought.

Many of the Portugueſe vallies are highly productive and luxuriant: and yet I think the productions of this, and of ſeveral other warmer countries, are not ſo rich and nutritive as they appear, and that moſt of the fruits,

fruits, if we except the grape and orange, ſhew better than they are in reality: they ſeem to me often weak and watery, as if not ſufficiently concocted, or nutritive; and as if forced up in a hurry by ſun and water, without ſufficient time and natural cultivation. And I think ſomething ſimilar is obſervable both in vegetable and animal life here. Few of the men, though often of a good ſquare make and active appearance, and poſſeſſing many other good qualities as men and ſoldiers, are capable of any great and continued exertions of ſtrength, reſolution, or perſeverance. There is a kind of female levity, weakneſs, and ſenſibility of character, which renders them more ſubject to ſudden fits of paſſion than to laſting habits.—Peculiarly diſpoſed to love and devotion;—with more ſenſibility than wiſdom; —*pocos y locos*, the Spaniards ſay of them; —they reſemble the French in many ways, and are very different from the Spaniards. I believe we rather confound theſe two neighbouring nations, and fancy a character of both which ſuits neither.

Though the ſame kind of government and religion, a ſimilarity of manners and opinions, may have brought them to an apparent reſemblance in the eyes of ſtrangers; yet on examination, they are obviouſly of a different race and character. The Portugueſe is naturally the moſt docile and complaiſant of all creatures, and the Spaniard the moſt obſtinate: the one ſeems to be moved by a kind of volatile feminine ſpirit of ſenſibility, and the other by one of a nature more maſculine, ſteady, obdurate, and determined; the one obſequious, obedient *muy rendido haſta derritirſe*; his manner and language the moſt feeling and *carinoſa*; generally deſirous to pleaſe, ready enough to learn and receive impreſſions, and may be formed to what you deſire; though, by turns, equally careleſs and indolent, weak, changeable, ſuperſtitious; he forgets ſooner than he had learned. Whereas the Spaniard is ever the ſame proud, obſtinate, lazy, but manly character, and will not eaſily receive or follow any impreſſions or motives but his own: by his religion and loyalty he has been

been enſlaved, which by any other means would have been very difficult: with a high ſenſibility, and a determined character, he may be led to be vindictive and cruel; with ſtrong nerves, and a perſevering mind, he may be very fit for a deſperate enterpriſe and conqueſt. But as ſuch qualities are not now the chief requiſites in the character of a ſoldier, nor ſo well adapted to the ready obedience and activity of modern diſcipline, I would perhaps now rather chuſe to recruit in Portugal than in Spain. Indeed, we have lately ſeen a great officer, Count de la Lippe, form a very good little army of theſe people, in leſs time than could probably have been done with the people of almoſt any other nation. But they will ſoon loſe their beſt habits and diſcipline, if the leaſt neglected, and will relapſe into their uſual ſloth and indolence, of which there is already too much appearance: already lulled to ſleep by falſe policy and religion, every thing ſeems now neglected except the church: their moſt devout ſovereigns amuſe them with religious proceſſions, with building convents and churches; while the army, the garriſons,

the navy, are all neglected, and half the commiſſions left vacant. If ſuch meaſures are continued, they cannot long be fit for war, and hence not very long a nation.

In every country ſomething of importance may be learned. To follow the ideas of that great officer Count de la Lippe, and ſee what he did, and intended, for the defence of this country, would be one of the fineſt military leſſons you could have. You ſhould ſee Elvas, which he fortified, and examine all his excellent ideas of fortification and artillery: his ſafe flanks, parapets, reſources, carriages, modes of œconomiſing power and ſpace, of making powder; in ſhort, his excellent ideas on almoſt every military ſubject: and then his general plans of defending this frontier, and of attacking Spain.

LETTER III.

Policy.—Industry.—Character.—Law.

THIS little nation, under the management of their late minister, the M. de Pombal, with all his faults and cruelties, had certainly begun to make some material advances and exertions, and to be again considered as of some importance in the scale of Europe. Those advances were chiefly owing to an intimate connection with England, and an enmity to Spain: both these powerful motives to national exertion, it is feared, are now fast wearing out, and no other can probably remain, sufficient to support their activity, and prevent the fabric, so little advanced, from falling to ruin. The present weak policy, of secretly courting the friendship of their natural enemy, will probably be productive of the worst consequences to them. It is to be feared, from the Queen-mother's late journey

journey to Madrid, that Portugal may now be conſidered as an appendage to Spain, and a member of the Bourbon alliance. Such are the conſequences of your mad American war; our allies will all forſake us, from an opinion of our inevitable decline, and of the riſe of America. Theſe conſiderations, beſides her family motives, might determine this ſenſible old Queen to place this kingdom under the tutelage of Don Carlos. But though apparently a prudent meaſure, it will be found, in time, to have been but a haſty and timid female policy, and would not have happened in the times of a Pombal or a Pitt. Though this kingdom may ſoon become again a province to Spain, that monarchy, which is already too large to be well governed, is not likely to gain much additional force or advantage by the acquiſition. And as the other nations will hardly agree to ſuch a change without a war, in that war will conſiſt the only chance of ſafety for Portugal, provided ſhe can be kept up to any tolerable degree of military preparation; but this we ſhall now ſee Spain exerting

all

all her ſecret influence to prevent. Indeed, if Spain could recover her ancient government, and then add and incorporate Portugal, the advantages might be very conſiderable to both, and this peninſula might riſe to be a very great nation.

The ſeeds of improvement have again been ſown in this country with thoſe of luxury, though the produce now again becomes doubtful. Their wants have been lately increaſing, and thoſe muſt increaſe the demand for the exertions of induſtry ſomewhere: hence more improvements have been attempted here than in Spain; and being of a more governable ſize, their attempts have generally ſucceeded better. In the northern provinces of this peninſula, and in Catalonia, the people are the moſt induſtrious, and their induſtry is ſupported under many oppreſſions, becauſe they are now accuſtomed to live well. The Portugueſe are more active and diligent ſince they began to love fine clothes, and ſince their pride has changed its objects, from the black cloak and ſpectacles, with an affectation of ſanctity and wiſdom, and having nothing

nothing to do; though ſome ſuch people are ſtill to be ſeen in certain parts of both theſe kingdoms. Certain kinds and degrees of luxury and expence become a ſource of activity among the people. It were to be wiſhed you could change the taſte of ſome of your lower claſſes, from drinking, to other more elegant and uſeful pleaſures. The puritaniſm of your reformation, and your wretched Sunday police, are the ſources of low debauch; impediments and misfortunes to an induſtrious nation. Might you not now venture to open your theatres on Sundays? and republiſh King James's book of Sports, with corrections and amendments? After church and ſchool hours, let the young and old take ſome diverſions, ſuch as tend to promote dreſs, and diſcourage drunkenneſs.

The people of this nation, as you may obſerve in their hiſtory, are remarkable for ſudden changes, without ſufficient forethought. Their two great revolutions were both quick and violent, and equally without plan or ſyſtem of government; firſt their recovery from the Moors, and then from

Spain,

Spain, whoſe depredations they muſt yet long feel. After admiring them as the diſcoverers and conquerors of the Eaſt, we are preſently ſurpriſed to ſee them ſo eaſily beaten and ſubdued by the firſt European power that follows them there. I have ſomewhere heard an anecdote, that ſoon after thoſe learned times of Emanuel, an enquiry was made for any one who could teach algebra to one of the princes, and that no ſuch perſon could be found in the kingdom. Such men as Pombal and La Lippe, you ſee, could ſuddenly turn them again into a reſpectable power, and almoſt an induſtrious people; and now we already begin to ſee them becoming very quickly as idle, corrupted, and ſuperſtitious as ever. On conſidering them individually, we find more than ordinary inconſiſtencies in their conduct and character; ſuch as the moſt penurious avarice, joined to a thoughtleſs ſloth, love of idleneſs and pleaſure: and very oppoſite paſſions ſeem to actuate them by turns, and in very quick ſucceſſion. They are like overgrown children, always falling before temptation, and always making freſh and ineffectual reſolutions:

and

and the Roman Catholic ſuperſtition remarkably promotes this weakneſs, and purpoſely debilitates the human character, in order to render it more manageable by the prieſthood. Like children too, they are often amiable and endearing; their political bad ſucceſs has not been owing to their character, but, as uſual, to their *poſitive* bad religion, and to their *negative* bad government, or total want of a civil conſtitution: nay, it is perhaps the very character that a greatla wgiver (if ſuch a being could yet be produced) would chuſe to work upon.

From the example of theſe two nations, we ſhould be tempted to believe, that where there is moſt law, there is leaſt juſtice; as well as with the greateſt appearance of religion, the leaſt moral conduct. This country is likewiſe overwhelmed with laws and lawyers, with needleſs and numerous regulations, all of which ſeem to embarraſs much more than they rectify: various writings are neceſſary on every the ſmalleſt tranſactions, and all are found inſufficient: hardly any houſe can be finiſhed, or any property poſſeſſed, without tedious and repeated

peated law-ſuits: the ſale of the ſmalleſt thing by auction muſt be attended with writings; but ſecurity is thence diminiſhed; and one tedious proceſs, carried through all the ſucceſſive appeals and tribunals, may only prove the ſource of many others in future: the loſer revives his pretenſions on the firſt change of ſyſtem, or of friends at court. Juſtice, and every thing in theſe two nations, is obtained by *impenos*. You ſee there cannot be any permanent ſecurity of property, or certainty of juſtice, nor indeed any conſiderable advances in arts or induſtry, without a free and permanent conſtitution of the ſtate.

In the courſe of civilization, of arts and refinement, the great and increaſing body of lawyers probably merit more attention and regulation than has been uſually beſtowed on them. Every ſociety of human beings, be it a nation, a corporation, or a company, we know will act with a certain ſecret *eſprit de corps*, or bias towards its own intereſts, againſt all mankind; and in a manner more unjuſt and unfeeling than individuals: and every corporate body, if not

not controlled, would tyrannize over all the reſt. Hence the great difficulties of regulating the leſſer bodies, of which the great one, the nation, conſiſts; and of forming a ſyſtem of government, wherein the different parts may not combine againſt the reſt of the community. If any nation ſhould ever, through all the ſteps of improvement, eſcape every other yoke, it may at laſt fall a prey to law itſelf; and the greateſt part of the property, and thence the government, might be gradually thrown into the hands of a powerful body of lawyers. They have many advantages in theſe countries, where there are ſo few gentlemen ſtudents of law, and where the people are ſo univerſally ignorant. I think they everywhere dictate the terms or words of moſt laws, and by that means, probably, create much work for future members of their corps, in future interpretations. I leave you to inveſtigate the conſequences. The termination of moſt governments ſeems to be that of abſolute monarchy, as the laſt deſperate remedy; and of the different ſpecies of tyranny, it is perhaps the moſt tolerable, at leaſt in Europe.

rope. As the beſt and moſt durable form of ſociety is probably that which conſiſts of the moſt complete ſyſtem of mutual control, and as you are confeſſedly before the reſt of the world in this, if you can but go on to improve when neceſſary, your government bids fair to outlive the reſt; and in the Britiſh iſles, after the general wreck, ſome remnants of loſt liberty may long remain.

LETTER IV.

Manners and Education.—Inquiſitorial and Monaſtic Spirit.—Toleration.—Romiſh Church, &c.

Oporto, 1780.

NO.—I do not forget my favourite text, and ſhould perhaps have added in my laſt, if there had been room, that it is only by manners and education that nations, or their governments, can be reſtored: thoſe muſt riſe and fall together. Your great Bacons, Miltons, Lockes, &c. have all ſeen and inſiſted much on the importance of education; and we are ſorry to ſee their opinion has had ſo little effect. In ſome ancient nations, proper teachers, the philoſophers, and others, were probably men of more conſequence in ſociety than ſuch men are with us. A good ſchool in each of your pariſhes would remedy more evils, and ultimately improve the conſtitution of

your

your government more, than all your efforts without them: education and legiſlation muſt mutually ſupport each other. I have been told, that Charles I. had ſome good plans on this ſubject, and might have done ſome good if he had been let alone. I think we are nearly agreed, that the general ſuperiority of the lower ranks in the northern parts of our iſland is owing to their education; and that the ignorance of your country ſquires becoming almoſt proverbial, muſt have had ſome foundation: nay, I fear your preſent public danger and probable decline might be traced to the ſame ſource; the abſurdity of ſome late meaſures cannot well be underſtood, nor explained, without taking ignorance into the account. So many independent country gentlemen, if they had had a tolerable education, with a little travel and knowledge of foreign affairs, could never ſurely have been brought to agree to ſuch meaſures as that of taxing their own colonies in any other way but their own; or in the preſent ſtate of Europe, to that of carrying a war acroſs the Atlantic, under ſuch obvious diſadvantages,

and againſt the prejudices of all the world, to ſubdue what could never be worth the conqueſt; and then to the beginning at the wrong end, and in the wrong way; and without knowing the nature of the tools they had to work with, or of the materials they had to work upon, or even the true ſtate of parties and affairs at home: How are we to account for ſo much ignorance and illiberality in the firſt and moſt generous nation of Europe, or of the world?

On inquiring after ſome old friends and acquaintance here, military and others, men of merit and information; alas! we find they are almoſt all gone to the Inquiſition: that horrid tribunal, it ſeems, is again let looſe in this reign againſt real merit and knowledge. The men moſt likely to improve their brethren have ever been the moſt obnoxious to this church. The Roman Catholic ſyſtem, from the time of its being eſtabliſhed in its full inquiſitorial and monaſtic ſeverity, has ſurely been more inimical to the advancement of human knowledge and improvement, than any other ſuperſtition that ever was invented; it

it ſeems better calculated to deſtroy all the little remnants of happineſs that civil tyranny might be forced or chuſe to ſpare: and nothing could well have been contrived to render men more uſeleſs to ſociety, more detached, more indifferent, and often inimical, to each other. Profeſſing to teach univerſal benevolence, it has in effect made them hate and perſecute one another. But it has been inſtituted with ſo much art, that it cannot be eaſily changed or removed, and we know the difficulties of reforming it: till that is more effectually accompliſhed, its profeſſors will contrive to throw the blame of all the miſchief it occaſions on their opponents. They have here ſucceeded wonderfully well in creating a ſure vacancy for themſelves, by rendering the civil power incompetent to govern the minds of the people, ſo as to render their own ſupplemental aid neceſſary. The Romiſh conclave has probably been the moſt artful body of politicians known in hiſtory. They have, as they thought, uſed precautions againſt every danger, and prepared a ſalve for every ſore. They have had a hand in

all the inſtitutions of importance to ſociety: in education, marriage, inheritance. Almoſt every tribunal has been inſtituted, influenced, or controlled, by the church. If every other guard and precaution ſhould fail, they had the bugbears of ſuperſtition always ready to frighten reaſon out of her way. But that church may now ſoon ſerve the world as an example, to ſhew how inſufficient artifice alone is to govern mankind, and that plain honeſty and perſeverance may hope to prevail againſt all impoſition.

Every church probably requires the wholeſome hand of control as much, at leaſt, as any other power in the ſtate. To hit the proper medium is doubtleſs rather difficult; how to encourage uſeful learning, religion, and morality, ſince theſe have been joined, without giving to their teachers any dangerous power or influence: they muſt have ſome, and will acquire more: How prevent their making any improper uſe of it? Permitting them to acquire, perſonally, a cenſorial power and influence, and prevent their employing any of it politically,

litically, or as a body, are real difficulties: in the ſurmounting of theſe, however, you have made conſiderable progreſs, and it is to be hoped you may ſtill go farther. A general and perfect toleration muſt be the point towards which you ſhould gradually move. I can never ſee any ſufficient reaſons, why your church government might not ſafely admit of much greater latitude to the officiating clergy in forms and opinions; nor can I perceive why any ſpeculative opinions ſhould diſqualify a man for any office that he is willing and able to fill. He ſhould rather be encouraged to try: official practice and duties would gradually wear off the noxious edge of the moſt inimical ſpeculations. It is high time to hazard a trial. Unleſs you enlarge the pale of church and ſtate, how are all your outcaſt ſheep ever to come in? or how is a reconciliation to be expected? I ſee nothing to fear, but much to hope, from the hypocriſy of conformity: but of that conformity, firſt make the ſteps few and eaſy, and not diſhonourable. You have got ſo far as to preach up toleration, but you fail in the practice:

your profeſſed principles, and their numerous exceptions, deſtroy each other. In the ſame breath with which you teach religious liberty, you abhor and anathematiſe the other ſects of chriſtians. Your church cannot judge in its own cauſe, and I am ſorry to ſee the ſtate judge ſo little better. Even your wiſe and temperate divines, of whom you have many, when they come to particulars, and to the practice, are ſcarcely proof againſt the bugbear dangers of oppoſite and ſeemingly hurtful principles; though the practice and hiſtory of the world, and even of their own religion, have ſhewn us that the lion and the lamb may, by habit, be brought to live together. Our reformation has, doubtleſs, had the merit of reſtoring to Chriſtianity much of her original mild and humane temper; and you are happily not now ſo ſenſible as we are here, of the miſchiefs of ſuperabundant zeal, and religious antipathies.

In moſt ſubjects, but more eſpecially in the ſpeculative and uncertain, men muſt differ in opinion, and a variety, rather than uniformity in religious ſentiments, ſeems

to have been the intention of the Author of nature. Religion ſeems neceſſary to moſt men, and each is entitled to that of his own choice. The utility is obvious of ſome moral teachers, and perhaps they ſhould be paid at leaſt in part by the ſtate; but of this I am doubtful. It might be well if the pay and reward of every profeſſion could be made to depend chiefly on their own merits, and diligence towards thoſe they ſerve. I am told that ſome of our governments in America might ſerve the world as patterns in this, that they ſucceed much better for having no ſtate religion or eſtabliſhment, and that the people are found to be quite competent to the management of all that buſineſs for themſelves.

You will perceive, that in giving you my doubts and opinions on theſe controverted ſubjects, I ſpeak politically, and as a layman. Some of our ſcientific friends, who have likewiſe ſeen and ſtudied the world in different countries, may be able to reconcile thoſe and other politico-religious difficulties, which, to me, appear to have become ſo complicated with our governments as to require

require the political and prudential wiſdom of ages yet to come, in order to arrange, ſimplify, and ſettle them as they ought to be. Nor can I pretend to decide on the proportion of good or harm that has been done by eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments in general, though I think it is evident enough here, that the balance is on the ſide of the latter; and that ſuch inſtitutions have been much more liable to abuſes than productive of benefits, in this, and ſeveral other countries. It is truly aſtoniſhing, and will be ſtill more ſo to an enlightened poſterity, how ſuch nations as theſe, which are ſcarcely able to ſupport themſelves, ſhould maintain in affluence a ſet of men, only to miſlead, to tyrannize over, and devour them.

In this manner was I writing to you, when I received yours almoſt on the ſame ſubjects. Your account of thoſe ſtrange fanatical riots in your capital, did not ſurpriſe me ſo much as you may imagine. I ſhould expect ſuch things to happen oftener in ſome part or other of the country. I have frequently mentioned, that the ſpirit of fanaticiſm ſtill exiſts among the people almoſt

almoſt every where, and that it is not ſufficiently known or underſtood by the ſuperior ranks of men. We ought to be thankful that religious wars have ceaſed ſo long, and that a little time is given to reaſon to recover herſelf. If reaſon could acquire zeal and energy enough to make the moſt of the occaſion, ſomething might perhaps be eſtabliſhed to keep fanaticiſm quiet till ſhe loſe or change her name and temper. I agree with you, that a perfect toleration would be the beſt remedy; but where is it to be found? unleſs it be in North America. Till the civil and religious conſtitution of your governments can be formed on principles of mental freedom, there cannot be much ſecurity of peace. While we depend on the accidental balance of ſects and parties, which is ſo ſubject to gradual changes, religious war is not baniſhed; ſhe only remains quiet till employed by ſome powerful hypocrite or enthuſiaſt. And if you wait till then, Proteſtantiſm may prove the weakeſt ſide. Reformers, after their firſt fervours, muſt probably continue to grow more lukewarm, and divided among themſelves; the philo-

ſophic apathy of their liberal and learned members is but ill-ſuited to cope with the zeal and aſſiduity, the unity and enmity, of their opponents. I fear we cannot ſoon hope for a complete toleration, nor expect the church voluntarily to grant places and power to their enemies, which they probably are, while treated as ſuch.

However, toleration being the only remedy, and hence the object to be kept in view, let us not loſe ſight of it: and it muſt be purſued with that philoſophic temper which is fit for legiſlation, though not for fighting. We muſt often accept of partial benefits, and ſhould not refuſe a part becauſe we cannot have the whole, nor reject laws for being only partially liberal and wiſe. Though we cannot arrive at perfection, let us not neglect the ſteps of approximation within our power. Such is the condition of human affairs: we muſt work with the tools, and with mankind, as we find them, and build our ſyſtems on the habits and principles already eſtabliſhed, with a view only to gradual improvement. We muſt not quarrel with the human race, and give them

up in deſpair, becauſe we ſee them ſo often employed in eſtabliſhing falſe principles, and then labouring to avert and correct their conſequences, by which the utmoſt exertion of human wiſdom is waſted in patching and mending its own errors. We ſee many abuſes in ſociety that muſt be left to grow big enough for a remedy, and become of a certain magnitude to deſerve a law which, like all other remedies in nature, is itſelf an evil; and we muſt wait till the remedy becomes the leſſer evil before it is applied. By watching and managing occaſions, more conceſſions may be gradually obtained in favour of the natural freedom of opinion; taking care neither to awaken thoſe inclined to ſleep within the eſtabliſhed church, nor alarm the watchful bigots without.

Toleration, though not yet completely attainable where there is a ſtate religion, would however be found ſo advantageous to all, that it might probably keep its ground if once admitted. It is perhaps for its excellence that this remedy is ſo hated and dreaded by the Romiſh church. But neither toleration, nor proteſtantiſm, can be ſafe while any of the

monaſtic or inquiſitorial ſpirit remains in Europe. In that ſpirit you may ſtill ſee your moſt powerful enemy. Monachiſm and proteſtantiſm, like fire and water, cannot long exiſt together in this great European republic, and ſtill leſs in the ſame nation. In that natural war, which muſt ever ſecretly ſubſiſt between them, the former muſt probably conquer at laſt, if not gradually extirpated in due time, and while it can be done with temper and moderation. It ſtill poſſeſſes all the advantages of a regular ſtanding army, over an irregular and unconnected militia.

It is the variety of opinions, ſo wiſely ordered by nature, that now ſaves men from the perſecutions of each other. The moſt ſingular opinions have been individually propagated without inconvenience to the public. Common ties and duties guide men while in ſociety; it is only when they leave it, and become members of other communities, that their opinions can have any influence that concerns the ſtate. The ſpirit and effects of all poſſible corporate bodies of men, ſeparated from the reſt of the nation, have not yet, I think, been ſufficiently ſtudied.

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The object, degrees, and terms of ſuch ſeparation, are known to be of importance, but they have not yet been well meaſured and eſtimated. Separate bodies, or aſſociations, can only be admiſſible on condition of their injuring neither the public, nor any individual. The Romiſh church, and her incorporate bodies of monaſtic orders, have far tranſgreſſed thoſe eſſential conditions. And thoſe armies of veterans, ſo wonderfully formed and united on the moſt unnatural objects and principles, with the Pope at their head, have proved the moſt formidable enemy that ever was raiſed againſt reaſon, liberty, and nature; by them the Popiſh ſyſtem has been well ſupported, and may poſſibly yet be reſtored. If that ſyſtem could have been completely eſtabliſhed on its profeſſed principles, conſidering only a future ſtate, and not this life, as worthy of our care and attention, it muſt have been immoveable, or have put an end to ſociety, or the human race, of which there was indeed once ſome appearance of danger, during the firſt fervours of that ſecluſive monaſtic mania. Though monaſteries became afterwards of

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ſome uſe, and ſerved at times as aſylums againſt oppreſſion, or as repoſitories of declining knowledge and induſtry; but when their utility ceaſed, they became a burden to ſociety, or worſe, and ought long ago to have been aboliſhed, if the rapacity of princes and governments could be truſted with the diſpoſal of their property for the public good. Fortunately their abſurd principles, though ſo artfully propagated as to ſucceed beyond belief, had however to labour ſo much againſt human nature, that ſhe at length proved too ſtrong for them: but in the conteſt, ſhe has not come off without injury, loſs of time, and force. The human character, ſo long in the ſhackles of ſuperſtition, may never again be able to walk well without them, nor recover her natural power and energy. The ſecular Romiſh clergy, with ſimilar principles, nevertheleſs maintain a character and conduct far leſs bigotted and pernicious, which is probably owing to their remaining officially more mixed with men, living and acting with us in the duties and occupations of life which, in that ſituation, become more powerful than the unnatural principles and

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ſpeculations of their profeſſion. If the Pope can ever be compelled to relieve them from celibacy, diſpenſe with the monaſtic vows, and aboliſh the regular orders, the dangers to liberty and improvement will be over, but not till then. Good policy may now join with philoſophy to encourage you to ſingle out, and declare war againſt moſt of the monaſtic orders; and you may ſoon get other (even Catholic) ſtates to join ſecretly in ſuch meaſures. This is no longer one of thoſe popular torrents that would overflow and increaſe by oppoſing it in front. Only the Pope, and a few adherents of ſmall weight and importance, continue to ſupport the monks: nay, they are rather generally deteſted by a large majority of moſt ranks, except ſome of the loweſt, and regarded with a jealous diſlike even by the ſecular clergy of their own church. All theſe would ſecretly rejoice at their diſſolution, and at every thing that might tend to diſappoint their views and credit, which depend much on their foreign miſſions: there, they are ſingularly laborious and indefatigable, and are not to be diverted from their purpoſe by any

ſocial or human feelings; theſe are all ſuperſeded and loſt in the habits and diſcipline of their order: not like *Turgot*, who ſaid lately to his king, that he was a man before he was an *intendant*: but theſe men ſeem to have been born friars, and to have taken the ſpirit of their order from their mother's womb. The number in England is always conſiderable, and ſtill more and more openly in Ireland, where they labour with ſucceſs, and contribute largely towards preventing the progreſs of reformation, of knowledge, and induſtry. It might be good policy for government to furniſh the people there with prieſts educated at home, to prevent their being ſupplied with thoſe regular bigots from abroad. From every ſtate of freedom ſhould ſuch inſtitutions, with all their members, be excluded. All the ſects, indeed, whoſe principles admit not of mutual toleration, ſhould be forced to it as a firſt condition of their being tolerated themſelves. A juſt government would not only refrain from dictating any ſpeculative opinions to its ſubjects, but would prevent its being done by others. Men ſhould be protected

protected from the tyranny of their own ſect, and all the ſects from each other. Under this head might be comprehended all that the ſtate has to do with religion.

The great object of the monaſtic orders is now the recovery of the loſt ſheep, and converting the nations who have ſtrayed from the flock. In ſome of theſe they may ſucceed; unleſs wiſer precautions are uſed, it may require only a few ſteps farther towards a certain degree of corruption and decline, and hence a licentious depravity in the lower ranks, ſo as to bring on a diſpoſition towards deſpotiſm, the general but ineffectual remedy of vice and ignorance. Then prieſts and friars come in as neceſſary inſtruments in a defective government, and may finiſh the reduction of the world again to ſuperſtition and barbariſm, from whence ſo little of it is yet long or far emerged. Thoſe bigots are much more aſſiduous and inſinuating, than the liberal and learned, in acquiring a ſhare in the direction of princes, or of thoſe about them, and in procuring ſome ſort of circuitous ſecret influence in courts. Indeed theſe two powers are eaſily

brought into alliance, and to draw together. Tyranny willingly enough employs ſuperſtition to ſubdue, to bind, and deliver up the people to him, while ſhe as readily accepts the employment, and receives with both hands, from her employer, for ſucking the brains and the blood of the people, and from thoſe very people whom ſhe miſleads and devours.

Where the ſtate aſſumes or delegates the taſk of defining or holding up to the people any ſet of ſpeculative opinions, in preference to all others, and either forces or bribes them into it; all other ſects are thus deprived of the ſame privilege and protection, and many of your beſt ſubjects are thence excluded from ſerving their country, and from being intereſted in the duration and proſperity of its preſent government. The church and ſtate ſet a bad example, whatever they may preach. But a church, or a ſtate, is an indolent unfeeling kind of ſuppoſititious being: liberal laws and conceſſions muſt be ſqueezed out of them by ſome ſort of neceſſity. Their ſituation, policy, or intereſt; the abſurdities and perſecutions of their enemies, as well as their

their own profeſſed tenets and principles, have all, at times, contributed to force them into certain degrees of toleration, which is not, I fear, very natural to any ſtate religion ſince that of ancient Rome. By repeated and well-timed endeavours you may, by degrees, get freed from ſubſcriptions to certain articles and creeds, and perhaps, at length, admit of all your ſubjects to ſerve the public in any department. You might begin by trying if all your numerous laws about religion could not be methodized and reduced. There may be no occaſion to proſcribe any individual opinions, but only to preſcribe the terms and limits of religious aſſociations, in which you would in effect exclude all the monaſtic orders, and inquiſitorial principles.

Some foreign philoſophers have told me, they rejoice to ſee that we do not, in England, endeavour to make our people too devout, *trop dévots*, for that even Proteſtant devotees are only prepared proſelytes for ſome friar or enthuſiaſt. The Roman Catholic doctrine has many advantages in the gaining of converts, being better and more

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artfully ſuited to the timid and indolent nature of man, than that of Luther or Calvin, which requires ſome exertion of mind. Were education nearly what it ought to be in England, you might truſt, and exerciſe the good ſenſe of the nation, with ſuch adverſaries as Romiſh monks, and any devotees, individually, though never *en corps*; but in your preſent ſtate, you are no match for them. I believe nothing but a right education, conſiſting chiefly of uſeful ſcience, diſcipline, and induſtry, which produces a certain ſilent veneration for the ſource of all beneficial religion, and a reſpectful indifference about ſectarial diſtinctions, can ſave you all from falling back into the lap of holy catholic church ſome time or other.

We might obſerve, if not too ſyſtematic, that the unbelieving philoſopher, and the zealous bigot, may be conſidered as the extremes between which may be arranged all the different ſectaries and opinions, with truth and wiſdom perhaps towards the center. The extremes may be the fartheſt wrong; but there is room for all individually. It is only the corps, and terms of aſſociation, that

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concern the public. If the inquiſitorial and temporal powers and property of the church ſhould continue to decline, till annihilated by wiſdom, ſcience, and good government; and we all go on improving in arts, induſtry, and uſeful knowledge, the monaſtic orders will probably in time be aboliſhed throughout moſt of Europe; but humanity hopes it may be done with more juſtice and liberality than was practiſed with the Templers and the Jeſuits. That prince, or government, will gain an eternal name, and do infinite ſervice to the world, who ſhall firſt aboliſh thoſe orders on the true and liberal principles of policy; by ſtopping the reception, permitting the preſent race of monks to die off, and appropriating their eſtates inviolably to public education *.

* The obſervations contained in the following note, were communicated by a clerical friend on reading the above.

"I confeſs, I am one of thoſe who think that the multiplication of creeds, and the eſtabliſhment of ſyſtematical confeſſions of faith, have been of no great ſervice to the cauſe of pure and undefiled religion." Dogmatical deciſions upon ſpeculative and controverted points are very conſiſtent with the genius of the church of Rome, but can never be vindicated in a Proteſtant church upon the grand principles of the Reformation, namely, that the ſcriptures of the

Old and New Teſtament are the only rule of faith and manners, and that in them every Chriſtian is bound to ſearch for thoſe truths which are neceſſary to his ſalvation.

I cannot conceive therefore, that the foundation of the Proteſtant church of England would be in the leaſt degree weakened by removing thoſe ſyſtematic confeſſions within which ſhe hath intrenched herſelf; and if thoſe who are called to ſerve at the altar, inſtead of being made to ſubſcribe to formularies of human compoſure, were only required to aſſent to the queſtions put in our offices of ordination; it appears to me, that the church would have as good ſecurity as any Proteſtant communion can reaſonably demand for the proper diſcharge of the important duties of the paſtoral care. If holy ſcripture, as our church maintains, in her ſixth article, containeth all things neceſſary to ſalvation, can it be ſuppoſed that human articles and creeds are neceſſary to enable the Goſpel to maintain its ground in the world? No. The church of Chriſt, we have our Saviour's word for it, is founded upon a rock, which all the powers of darkneſs ſhall never be able to overthrow; and his religion will always finds its way into the hearts of the well-diſpoſed, without requiring any aſſiſtance from the arbitrary decrees of ſynods, conſiſtories, and convocations. The articles and creeds of the church of England were deſigned to prevent diverſity of opinion in matters of religion, an attempt both abſurd and impracticable, as experience hath fully evinced; for is it not well known that Calviniſts and Arminians, Trinitarians and Arians, officiate in the eſtabliſhed church? and while men of ſuch diſcordant principles continue to enter promiſcuouſly into the church, can any reaſonable plea be adduced either for the expediency or utility of continuing the preſent mode of ſubſcription? For, to uſe the words of the great Eraſmus, as bonds, deeds, covenants, obligations, indentures, expreſſed in a multitude of words, afford matter for law-ſuits; ſo, in religion, a profuſion of determinations, decrees, and deciſions, begets endleſs

endless controversies. Any question concerning Christ's knowing or foreseeing the bad uses that might be made of his religion, I think ought by no means to be printed. He undoubtedly foreknew all the uses that would be made of it. All power is committed to him: the world is under his government, and the abuses which he has permitted to be made of his doctrine have been working to some good end, and they will all, in due time, give way to the establishment of that period of righteousness, in which the pure banner of the Gospel shall rise triumphant on the ruins of every corrupt system that human vanity and craft have devised.

LETTER V.

Appearance of the Country. — People. — Braga.—Oporto.—Brazils.—Wine Trade. —Lower Claſſes.

Oporto, 1780.

IN theſe northern provinces of Portugal are found the moſt induſtrious people, as well as the pleaſanteſt country. The export of their linens to the Brazils is yearly increaſing, without any particular encouragement, or any great manufactory being eſtabliſhed. The junction of domeſtic arts and trade in villages, manufacture with agriculture, is highly advantageous to a country, and has generally ſucceeded whenever it has been attempted, as in England, Sileſia, Switzerland. The country is nobly varied into mountains, hills, vales, and woods, all on theſe beautiful rivers, the Minho, Lima, and Douro, and others that feed them. The vine-

yards,

yards, trees, and white houſes, mix well with the rocks and rivers: but I decline deſcriptions. Theſe rivers are embarraſſed with increaſing bars at their mouths, which might have been removed by art and induſtry, and which an increaſing commerce would ſoon have repaid with intereſt. There is no public concern that requires a more conſtant national attention than ſea-ports. In theſe, and in good roads, conſiſts the chief foundation of the ſuperiority of civilized and cultivated nations, over the barbarous and ignorant, or oppreſſed. The larger plains of Braga and Guimaraens are richly planted, watered, and cultivated. In deſcending from the ſurrounding mountains, the rich fields, the vineyards, and luxuriant produce, furniſh the moſt grateful ſcenes and proſpects. The fineſt fruit-trees feſtooned with vines, as in Italy. But we are diſappointed to find, amidſt ſuch apparent plenty, the miſerable ſtate of animal life, and ſo diſproportioned to the vegetable: men, children, cattle, in ſo ſtarving a condition. I believe this is too often the caſe throughout the world; in

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the fineſt countries the moſt miſerable people. The cauſes of it may be various. Neceſſity is the mother of all exertion; nothing leſs can move us. Nature, by furniſhing the wants of men too eaſily, curtails their powers. Canes, reeds, gourds, the palm and the cocoa tree, help to produce and perpetuate indolence and ſtupidity. The cold climate, and the rocky mountains, often force induſtry. But in moſt old nations, where oppreſſion has generally been progreſſive, the ſtate, the church, and the landlord, at length take all the produce and profit from thoſe who labour, except the barely neceſſary: that, being in England two or three times more than it is here, muſt be left to the cultivator: ſo that ſome degree of luxury, expence, and good living among the people, becomes a public good. I think the cattle of poor people are almoſt every where alike, and nearly of the ſame poor, ragged kind: a variety of improved breeds of cattle can only be found in a country of rich farmers.

Braga is a fine open country town. The clergy, all-powerful here too, as at St. Jago.

Their

Their *Bon Jeſus*, or Mount Cavalry, is a great work, conſiſting of roads, ſtairs, chapels, up through a pleaſant aſcent of a woody mountain. It muſt have been attended with great labour and expence. Where deſpotiſm has left no other power but the church, that is capable of great works, the public is obliged to her when ſhe chuſes to employ a numerous poor, though in uſeleſs labour: and ſtill more, when ſhe employs them in works of taſte.

Oporto has been much improved and beautified by its preſent governor Don Juan d'Almada, with the aſſiſtance and advice of our good conſul. But one man cannot do much for his country where there is ſo little public ſpirit, and more of that ſpirit cannot perhaps be expected under ſuch a government: nor can the arts and trades neceſſary to great public works, be found in ſuch a country. They know not how to eſtimate their own ſtrength here more than in Spain. They have begun an immenſe building for an hoſpital, which cannot probably be finiſhed in leſs than an hundred years; and perhaps never. They had the plan from

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our judicious Car: but the paper is now nearly rotten, and in pieces, and none of them can copy any part of it, nor can they go on without it, and hardly indeed with it. Unleſs ſcience, taſte, and ſecurity, accompany the introduction of riches, they cannot have half their natural effects, nor appear in public or private works and improvements: but here the appearance of the adjacent country-forms almoſt an exception to this rule. The taſte of the Engliſh merchants for country-houſes and gardens has conſiderably prevailed, in ſpite of bad tenures, workmen, &c. And the green woods, ſpeckled with white houſes, accord with the rocky ſcenery in furniſhing out many beautiful landſcapes. But other works loudly demanded more of their public attention. Half their liberalities to churches, convents, and hoſpitals, would have removed the bar of their river and improved its navigation, and might, by this time, have doubled their commerce and induſtry.

The trade and proſperity of the Brazils might be carried almoſt to any imaginable extent by a free and wiſe government.

They now ſend there, from hence, from twenty to thirty ſhips a year, which return worth about 10,000*l.* each, chiefly in ſugars. By my beſt accounts, that country is capable of every kind of produce and improvement, to a degree beyond what has been generally conceived. The late miniſter did not overlook ſo great an object: there, he attempted a great deal, as uſual, ſome of which ſucceeded: he tried to regulate and legiſlate for that great colony, and to liberate the people from the oppreſſion of viceroys, &c. but the diſtance, the corruption, and decline, are too great for ſuch trivial modes of reformation. Probably nothing leſs than a free government, ſuch as that of ſome of our colonies, and a total ſeparation from Portugal, could give to the Brazils the proſperity of which it is capable: and if we could at the ſame time bring this, the mother-country, up to a government ſomething like ours; ſuch ſeem to be the only ways left to preſerve the two countries from annihilation under the dead weight of the Spaniſh monarchy.

Their

Their wine trade here has long been in a proſperous increaſing way, from the time of our Queen Anne, or perhaps earlier, when other wines of this coaſt, as thoſe of Viana and Galicia, were in faſhion; theſe might be improved, and again come to be liked; our taſte is changeable. About thirty thouſand pipes, they ſay, are exported here annually to England, at about 15*l.* a pipe—half a million: it coſts you, that drink it, at leaſt a million, and you probably pay as much more for other wines and ſpirits; ſo that we Engliſh ſwallow about two millions in foreign drink. A great joint ſtock and privileged company is eſtabliſhed here, originally by Pombal; ſo little did he know of commerce. They might ſoon, if favoured by an ignorant government, engroſs all the wine trade of the country: which indeed they might have done ere now, if the zeal and activity of individuals did not enable them to ſupport ſome competition even with great companies. If this company undertake the woollen fabrics, as talked of, they may ſoon be ruined. They may become creditors to a government which can

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give them no ſecurity: though it may pay them with ſome grant or privilege to cheat or oppreſs the people, it will afterwards ſqueeze them as a ſpunge. They had better go on, contending with the Engliſh merchants, a competition which is of ſervice to all parties. Though a ſpirit of monopoly is perhaps inherent in trade, and particularly in companies, a wiſe government will be watchful to counteract it, and preſerve a fair competition. A great company would probably ſoon ruin any country, if it could be as active and aſſiduous as an individual: but happily their powers are generally diſproportioned to their diſpoſition; and great combinations or confederacies are luckily ſubject to more failures and defects than ſingle perſons, which help to diminiſh the dread and danger to the reſt of mankind.

Whatever concerns the lower and moſt numerous claſſes of men ſhould be the moſt intereſting to us. The general police of a country, its merits and defects, are objects of importance to travellers: but I do not mean to trouble you with particulars which cannot intereſt you much at that diſtance.

Our poor fiſhermen here are taxed above 70 *per cent.* of what they produce or catch, and yet they are numerous, though very poor and ragged, or rather naked. The poverty of the people, and hence their indifference about the comforts of life, are evils of extenſive influence on the improvements of a nation. Where the lower claſſes are ſo eaſily ſupplied and ſatisfied, nobody cares much about their comforts or conveniencies. Hence the hoſpitals, priſons, barracks, inns, &c. are ſo badly ſupplied, and cruelly neglected: and though the people who inhabit thoſe places ſhould be ſuppoſed as eaſy and contented as thoſe of other countries in ſimilar ſituations, it can only be becauſe they are habituated to poverty, dirt, and ill treatment, which renders them ſo much the meaner, weaker, and more uſeleſs beings. Some philoſophers who fancy that the rich nations are the moſt corrupted and weakened, and the poorer the moſt virtuous and vigorous, take their notions from books, and not from obſervation and experience. But in ſearching for the ſource of all this, we ſhall again find it in the nature of the

govern-

government. In some of the ancient republics, poverty with freedom and self-importance, produced the best effects on the human character; here, poverty with oppression produces the worst.

LETTER VI.

Liſbon.—Marquis de Pombal.—Sovereigns and Government.—Character, &c.

Oporto, 1780.

LISBON.—Here, even more than in other great towns, the benevolent mind is wounded on viewing the mixture of luxury and miſery, the diſtreſſing extremes of poverty and affluence, in a thouſand ways. The melancholy hiſtory of its deſtruction by the earthquake in 1755 is well known. It is ſtill rebuilding on a plan of the Marquis de Pombal's, which, though noble and magnificent, is rather gigantic, and barbarouſly great too, *à l'Eſpagnole*. This town was always remarkable, I believe, for being at once ſumptuous and naſty, and will probably be ſo ſtill. The ſmell of the tide at low water, is very diſagreeable in all the lower parts, as well as that of every houſe you enter.

enter. Common ſewers, cleanlineſs, internal conveniencies, have all been too much ſacrificed to external appearance, which, after all, is in a bad ſtyle of architecture; immenſe ranges of building without parts, ill proportioned and divided: it is obvious, that nothing but the outſide drawings of the elevations have been previouſly conſidered, and that the art and artiſt have been controlled by the ignorance of power. We may form opinions of a nation from their taſte in the arts, and ſtyle of their public buildings. Sacrificing too much to appearances, to graces and ornaments, may be the vice of the age. Wiſdom ſaid, let the uſeful be ornamented; but Folly reverſed the order of the ſentence, and ſubſtituted the acceſſory for the principal. Where you ſee trivial things crowded with ornaments, and without ſufficient ſpaces of relief or repoſe for the eye, from the extremes of confuſion, or of uniformity; from the lofty domes or ranges of columns, where nothing of importance is either to be covered or ſupported, you may deduce the imbecility of the artiſt, and

partly of the nation where he could be employed in preference. The miniſter had certainly great merit in getting the city rebuilt at all; and there is a grandeur and ſublimity, though a want of taſte and ſcience, in his idea: but we ſhould have expected a real great man to have encouraged the artiſts, foreign and native, by promoting a competition for the beſt plan, inſtead of enforcing his own. We find him, like many other great men, not exempt from the weakneſs of fancying he knew every thing better than any body elſe; he had the misfortune of being beyond controul. No man choſe to preſume to underſtand even his own trade equally with him. This noble ſituation certainly deſerved the beſt plan poſſible. Nature ſeems to have marked out this ſite, and this city, for the capital of the peninſula; and if the Philips had moved their court thither, their poſterity might now have been in poſſeſſion of the whole.

The Marquis de Pombal was certainly a great and bold reformer, and at two or three critical periods was of ſignal ſervice

to his country. His intrepid and active ſpirit raiſed his nation from indolent and ſupine inſignificance, to a degree of exertion, and to a ſtation in the general ſcale, long unknown to them, and to which it might eaſily have been kept up, if managed only with common attention and abilities, by purſuing the maxims of which he had already ſurmounted the difficulties of eſtabliſhing. But they already ſink in the ſcale, and muſt probably decline ſtill farther. I wiſh you to look yet higher for a real great man —for a legiſlator. The genius and the knowledge of this miniſter did not go far enough beyond mediocrity in the great leading principles and objects of the firſt importance to a nation; nor could he eſtabliſh a free and permanent conſtitution in the ſtate, which is the only effort of wiſdom and virtue that can entitle a man to the character of a lawgiver, or that can ſecure an eternal name and a laſting nation. You ſee how few of the numerous regulations of our modern reformers can outlive them. However, this miniſter, by an union, rather uncommon, of boldneſs and artifice,

by a knowledge of men, and of England *, he effected ſome great and many difficult things. He undertook and completed certain kinds of enterpriſe and reformation which were then thought impoſſible, as on occaſion of the war with Spain, of the earthquake, the conſpiracy, in commerce, colonies, colleges, church, nobility, &c. the hiſtory of all which is tolerably known. Though we may doubt his underſtanding all the minutiæ of every buſineſs into which he choſe to enter, and had the ambition to lead, it is plain that he knew men, and particularly his countrymen, whom he could either *lead* or *drive*; and we are therefore ſurpriſed to find him often preferring the latter mode, and cannot believe that ſo many examples of inhuman cruelty were neceſſary for any good political purpoſe; nor can we conceive that the national character required ſuch ſeverity. Though ſome of the Portugueſe may, at times, be cruel and vindictive, when hurried away by their

* He confeſſes freely, that he learned what he knows of politics, in England, and chiefly from Sir Robert Walpole.

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keen and temporary paſſions; yet they ſoon cool and repent. The too frequent inſtances of private revenge may be more owing to the ſtate of laws and ſociety, than to any thing in their native character or temper of mind, which, though hot and violent, is, I think, naturally generous, affable, forgiving. They might be ruled by the ſceptre of equity eaſier and better than by the rod of iron. Strict and ready juſtice would probably ſoon diminiſh aſſaſſinations.

We may likewiſe regret in this miniſter, that ſome of his public ſchemes had too often a retroſpect to his own little private or family intereſts. For example, we underſtand, that he adopted the abſurd French idea of forcing the people to root up their vines to ſow the land with corn. The law being found too ſevere, exceptions and indulgences were granted: and on the whole, his own eſtates were made to profit the moſt by thoſe changes. We ſhould not be diſappointed at not finding in the moſt perfect human character, a conſtant ſeries of the diſintereſted efforts of virtue; but a real great mind, in the purſuit of important

objects,

objects, muſt be above pecuniary intereſts. More benevolence and magnanimity, with deeper ſcience and greater views, joined to his boldneſs and deciſion, would have made him a great legiſlator, and a reformer of extenſive and laſting utility. He probably thought himſelf eminent as a legiſlator, as an architect, a general, a merchant, &c.; but his greatneſs in all theſe capacities begins already to appear at leaſt doubtful, though he muſt ever be allowed ſignal merit as a ſecretary of ſtate. Like moſt modern reformers, he was not probably aware, that in order to produce the total change which he wanted, and eſtabliſh his reform on a fixed and laſting baſis, the exiſting principles and form of the whole political machine required a total though gradual renovation, which could not be effected by putting his hand to particular parts, where the motion muſt ceaſe when the hand is withdrawn. He doubtleſs corrected many abuſes, and many of his laws were good, if they could have laſted. Since his regulations for the admiſſion of monks, and his limiting their number, the commons and

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waſte lands have been obſerved to diminiſh. The ſons of the country people, deprived of that reſource of idleneſs and ſuperſtition, have been obliged to attempt farming and other induſtrious ways of life; but that happy progreſs is already at a ſtand; the gates of holy church are again open for reception. We hear, that during the firſt year after the late king's death, and the retreat of his miniſter, the biſhop of Braga alone has admitted 7000 into holy orders. The benefits reſulting from his deſtruction of the order of Jeſuits I conſider as doubtful. It was deſtroying their beſt ſchools before they had any others to ſupply their place; nor are they likely ſoon to find any: and it is poſſible, that Catholic Europe may thence decline, inſtead of advancing in knowledge and ſcientific improvements. If monachiſm were admiſſible in any ſociety, that order might perhaps have been reformed to advantage, and rendered more uſeful, without a total abolition. Beſides, they were, like your oppoſition, always ſome check upon regal power, though not always from the virtuous motives of public good.

good. But for that reaſon has the jealouſy of monarchs been awakened, and contributed the moſt to their downfall. Their greateſt merit was probably that of promoting and improving education and legiſlation in Paraguay, which they might have been made to improve ſtill farther. That colony and ſome of their ſchools may deſerve to be examined and imitated before they are quite extinct and forgotten.

The Marquis's ſchool of commerce here was certainly a good idea, and highly proper in a country from whence the true principles of trade had ſo long been baniſhed; but he might have ſucceeded better had he attempted leſs, which may frequently be obſerved of reformers, when they deſcend to minutiæ. A great man eſtabliſhes general laws and principles, and leaves to their gradual influence, and to time, the bringing up of many leſſer objects. His plan of reformation in the univerſity of Coimbra was likewiſe good, but the particulars again too voluminous; the ſpirit and the merits of his ſyſtem, all enveloped and regulated away in huge volumes of monaſtic minutiæ. How-

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ever, ſeveral good foreign profeſſors had been collected; but ſome of the natives having caught a little too much of contagious ſcience and freedom, were ſoon ſent to the Inquiſition, and the foreigners have departed. Moſt of his other inſtitutions, manufactories, &c. have ſhared the ſame fate, or will ſoon follow. His regulations reſpecting the church and the nobility ſeem too often dictated by a kind of cruel hatred to them, more than by a regard to the public weal. He might, with a better grace, have reduced their power and inſolence, if not ſo obviouſly tending to increaſe his own. Among his various reforms, it is rather ſurpriſing he did not aboliſh the Inquiſition; but he has choſen to retain it for the malignant purpoſe of employing it as a ſtate, or rather a miniſterial, engine.

Anxious and ardent minds, intent on their object, are apt to overlook many things that lie in the path which leads to it; and they forget that the path is life itſelf, and may be too ſhort to reach the point in view. This miniſter's complicated and disjointed fabric, built on a baſis inſecure;

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and ſurrounded with enemies, he might eaſily have foreſeen could not long ſubſiſt after his adminiſtration. Several eſſential parts in the ſyſtem of national proſperity he overlooked or miſunderſtood, as well as the firm and conſtitutional mode of fixing them on intereſts of ſufficient ſupport: ſuch as roads, poſts, finance, agriculture, and above all, a legiſlature; in theſe, his ideas ſeem to have been neither ſufficiently enlarged nor modernized. Commerce remains ſtill overwhelmed with ill-judged duties and regulations: internal taxation not better. For example, the additional tenth laid during their laſt war, and ſtill continued, is probably more prejudicial than another of ſix times the amount, if more equally diſtributed. This, being levied only on lands and houſes that are rented, tends to diſcourage farming and farmers, who are always the chief improvers of a country. I leave you to inquire into the farther particulars of their taxation and finance when neceſſary. The myſtery with which the operations and amount of their revenue are here concealed, may be conſidered among the ſymptoms

and fooliſh arcana of deſpotiſm. The amount, I underſtand, is ſubject to conſiderable fluctuation and uncertainty, as well as many other things in this country. There can be no ſecurity, nor ſtability, where the ſupreme power is ſo ſubject to change its principles with every change of circumſtances, of perſons or events. The longeſt life of one man, though the beſt of kings or miniſters, will never prove a ſufficient dependence for the people, to give them time or courage to improve in matters of any great national importance. In ſhort, the ſtate reformer, who does not eſtabliſh a balanced and a laſting conſtitution, does nothing. The legiſlative ſpirit is not yet revived in the world, though we may hope to ſee cauſes ariſing at a diſtance that may awaken it. In an age of ſcience, experiment, and enterpriſe, it is rather ſurpriſing there have been ſo few ſtate reformers in modern Europe. Schemers of every claſs form an uſeful race of men, and are not yet conſidered as they deſerve. The bold political innovator is probably as neceſſary a character as any other, for the improvement

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of the world. He leads us beyond the bounds of habit and cuſtom, a neceſſary ſtep to future advances; and though he may ſometimes lead us wrong, it is perhaps better to go wrong ſometimes than ſtand ſtill too long. This man once promiſed to be one of theſe: the cauſes of his failure may furniſh leſſons of importance. We may be excuſed for thus canvaſſing the conduct of miniſters; or if, to anſwer the purpoſes of uſeful knowledge, we judge, like many good writers, a little haſtily of men and meaſures, with the ſecrets and difficulties of which we are not ſufficiently acquainted; they are however fair game to purſue for our inſtruction, though they may deſerve more excuſe and conſideration for their ſuppoſed errors than they generally meet with.

The only public entertainments now in this fine capital conſiſt of religious ceremonies and proceſſions, which are attended by the royal family with exemplary devotion. We learn that theſe good ſovereigns have determined not to take away any lives, even of the greateſt criminals, during their reign, and that they will rather

abandon

abandon the throne than go to war. This has ſo uncommon a ſhare of the milk of humanity and religion as to command our reſpect and beſt wiſhes, though we know too well that ſuch a ſyſtem will not ſucceed; and we can only regret that mankind are not yet to be governed by ſuch maxims. However, if it muſt be a weak government, theirs is at leaſt an amiable weakneſs. This might ſerve as an important experiment, if the wiſdom and equity of all the other parts and operations of government could be made to correſpond; if the neceſſary changes in religion, education, legiſlation, could follow; if the motives of ſhame, of emulation, of freedom, and ſelf-importance; of rewards proportioned to milder and more certain puniſhments, could be inſtituted: but a part of a ſyſtem cannot ſtand alone, nor produce the effects of the whole.

In ſome things, theſe people have kept ſtill farther behind the reſt of Europe than Spain. Many of their moral ideas, their notions of honour, revenge, fidelity, of love and marriage, you will find very different from ours. It appears in hiſtory, that they

were not formerly ſo very different from the reſt of Europe, and that they had, in the days of chivalry, ſome as gallant knights as any of the other nations, and many eminent officers at the time of their conqueſts and diſcoveries: and we are at a loſs to account for the baſe modes of private revenge here, taking place of the more generous method of duelling, which, though ſtill barbarous, has long been general, and perhaps not quite unneceſſary nor uſeleſs in Europe. Some of the cauſes of theſe and other differences might be traced to the power of their church and the badneſs of their government; the one being yet more powerful, ignorant, and ſuperſtitious, and the other more deſpotic and defective, than even thoſe of Spain. The firſt eſtabliſhment and ſubſequent revolution of this nation were, like themſelves, raſh and improvident, the plans haſty and incomplete; no ſyſtem of conſtitution like thoſe of cotemporary nations was eſtabliſhed. Hence came in the church to govern in almoſt every thing eſſential to ſociety, and thence may be deduced many of thoſe differences and deficiencies in

their manners and moral ideas, their falſe notions of honour, revenge; of ſins, virtues, merits, &c.

Their people of rank are extremely pleaſing and affable, though ſomewhat formal and affected, like the old French, whom they reſemble in many ways, as in taſte of building, of dreſs, in levity of manner and character, in grimace and affectation, and even in their taſte of pronunciation, and in that of ſinging; their national ſongs being generally ſome heavy lamentation in the leſſer third, though ſometimes in a ſtyle of the pathetic and expreſſive, far beyond any of the French, or indeed any other national melodies we know of: and as to muſic in general, they have greatly improved on their original, and have now acquired ſo ardent a love for the Italian muſic and language, and a taſte ſo highly delicate and refined, as ſurpaſſes all other nations except Italy itſelf; and probably no other country could have formed a Perez and an Avondano, nor have eſteemed them as they deſerve. With a character of ſuch high ſenſibility, a diſpoſition ſo kind

and courteous, ſo feeling and amiable, they muſt perhaps be proportionally weak and unmanly, eſpecially under their preſent mode of education and government; yielding to every ſenſual temptation, and as readily diſpoſed to repentance and contrition; modelled by, and proper ſubjects for, a prieſtly government; ſeldom capable of a degree of perſeverance to be depended on; children who rarely arrive at the age of maturity. Yet ſuch a character, ſuſceptible of every impreſſion, under a wiſe government, if kept alert, and employed on proper objects, might be rendered as capable of virtue and exertion, as it is now ſubject to vice and weakneſs. My prepoſſeſſion of conſidering them as an old French colony may be juſtified by their hiſtory. They conquered their country from the Moors, under princes of the houſe of Burgundy, who drew, and probably recruited, their forces from France. This, and their ſubſequent connections with that nation, may partly account for the reſemblance.

There is ſomething peculiarly affable and pleaſing, tender and endearing, in the women

men of this country; in their manner, voice, and converſation, eſpecially among the higher ranks. Their ſize is rather ſmall, but their form frequently of an agreeable and elegant caſt. But I do not mean to be particular concerning a people ſo well known to many of our countrymen. More leſſons and obſervations might doubtleſs be gathered by a longer reſidence. The uſual rapid mode of travelling affords too little time to ſee, and often too much to write.

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LETTER VII.

Of Books.—Of Man.—Portugal.—Of Societies.—The World.—Europe.—Confederacies.—Letters.—War.—Travelling, &c. in a variety of miſcellaneous Reflections.

To Mr. A. J.

Oporto, 1789.

I MEAN here to anſwer ſeveral of your laſt in one, and to give you a few more looſe hints and reflections, ſuch as I wiſh you to remember, chiefly from my common-place book. The reviſion of more notes of journies, ſome to Italy and other parts of the Mediterranean, muſt be left to another occaſion; but the utility muſt become more evident before it is undertaken. You have more writings already publiſhed, concerning thoſe, and the other civilized parts of the world, than you can well digeſt. I know not yet where

where you can find any good accounts of the Portugueſe authors, unleſs it be in Antoni, who includes thoſe of Portugal with the Spaniſh, I believe, as far as he goes; and we hope the ſame method will be purſued by the academicians at Madrid, who are publiſhing a new edition of this work, and that they will bring it farther down*. Portugal, you will find, has alſo had her period of learning, and ſome good writers for their age, chiefly during her days of proſperity, of her diſtant diſcoveries and conqueſts. Arms, arts, letters, you ſee, generally flouriſh and decline together. They had ſcientific writers the firſt, and very ſoon after or almoſt cotemporary with thoſe of Italy; as Nunhez, or Nonius, to whom we owe the preſent excellent method of dividing our quadrants. He publiſhed in 1537.

Such are the books, after all, probably of the moſt utility to man; thoſe of arts and ſciences. In conſidering the immenſity of other publications, I am often led to doubt

* See accounts of Portugueſe authors, in a work entitled, *Summario da Bibliotheca Luſitana*, 4 vols. Liſboa, 1786.

whether their utility may not diminiſh with their number, till at laſt the ſpeculative and learned will write only for each other; while thoſe who have other buſineſs to mind will deſpair, at the ſight of our immenſe increaſing libraries, of any information that way, and the bulk of mankind remain ſtill more ignorant and indifferent of what paſſes among the learned. The voluminous comments of the laſt ages, and the trifling chit-chat ſtyle of this, may ſo fill the world with volumes as to frighten our idle ſons from reading any of them. But let us hope that time will purge away the droſs, and leave only the uſeful, and that our numerous works may be of more ſervice to poſterity than to us, when the eſſence comes to be extracted and brought together. Hence good epitomes of paſt knowledge become the moſt uſeful publications, as it is only by ſuch means that ſcience can be diffuſed, and have beneficial influence on a whole nation.

I approve much of your reading Monteſquieu, A. Ferguſon, A. Smith, Hume, and Blackſtone. As I would have you think as well as read, I ſhould prefer the

book that is the oftenest turned down on the table, to take a turn round the room, and that makes you dwell and feaſt upon thinking. Take enlarged views of man, of the whole ſpecies, as well as of nations, claſſes, and individuals; contemplate human nature and ſociety in the declining, and in the advancing ſtate. When we conſider the active principles in our nature, it is difficult to conceive how the human race can well become retrograde. Surely nothing leſs than the united efforts of tyranny and ſuperſtition, of paſſion and ignorance, could deprive them of their natural habits of purſuing their own intereſt, and hence, when well underſtood, that of the ſociety and of the ſpecies. However, this is not rare, but frequent in the hiſtory of mankind: their natural induſtry is often ſo checked and ſtifled that the national ſtock diminiſhes, and the ſociety declines: we ſee it in theſe two nations every ſtep we take. Portugal, I am ſometimes inclined to believe recoverable, if its inhabitants, or rather government, could only be wiſe enough to preſerve an intimate connection with England, and their enmity to Spain. Thence might

might proceed motives to uſeful exertion. By ſome wiſe miniſter, bred in England, they might in time obtain a free and fixed conſtitution of government, as the only means of duration and proſperity for this little nation and its colonies. Nothing elſe can give it ſtrength to compenſate the want of ſpace.

But again, when we view human ſociety on the other ſide, and contemplate the numerous cauſes of decline, as thoſe of bad education; the predominance of the ſelfiſh principles over the benevolent; public abuſes which by ſo many ways creep in and multiply each other; the difficulties of combining liberty with ſecurity, ſufficient to awaken and ſupport induſtry; and even where theſe are once eſtabliſhed, we ſee arts and luxury, ſcience, dependence, and ſlavery, grow up together, or the wiſdom of ages deſtroyed by one fooliſh meaſure, or miniſter: the ſtandard of virtue, to which all muſt in ſome degree conform, we ſee varying every age; at one time rigid and ſavage, at another refined and relaxing, as ignorance and ſuperſtition retire to make way for knowledge and vicious indulgence; and thence the gradual decline of all public ſpirit,

ſpirit, which ſoon becomes inſufficient to contend with the private views and efforts of a few, to whom the many are at laſt ſubdued, ſo as to baniſh again the ſpirit of labour and exertion; till by degrees the preſent civilized and cultivated countries become the prey of deſpotiſm and barbarous deſerts once more, and thence new nations ariſe. So that we ſee the moral world is probably more ſubject to great, though gradual revolutions, than the natural. This circle muſt perhaps be often repeated, and the hiſtory of all be well preſerved, before we can eſtabliſh right principles on which improvement and ſtability at once depend.

Societies can never be formed by perfect wiſdom. Colonies from cultivated nations may have ſome advantages; and we accordingly find thoſe few, within the period of hiſtory, to have made the quickeſt and greateſt progreſs; as the Aſiatic Greeks, Carthage, the Roman colonies, North America. But as they muſt always retain ſome of their native vices, as well as improvements, they muſt therefore, perhaps, come ſooner to decay. Some think that modern

Europe

Europe may be already paſt her meridian, and now on the decline; and that our ſyſtems of government and religion are not capable of greater advances than what we have ſeen. Neighbouring nations gradually aſſimilate, though ſlowly; but whether towards the beſt or the worſt among them, may yet be doubtful; whether thoſe that riſe, or thoſe that decline draw the reſt after them; whether he that ſubdues men by arms, artifice, or corruption, may not have more imitators than their greateſt benefactors who render them induſtrious, free, and happy: One warlike deſpot muſt produce others, as his neighbours muſt, for defence, imitate him in maintaining great and deſtructive armies; and theſe, in the manner they are commonly raiſed and conſtructed, generally tend to ruin their own nations as much as their enemies. But a wiſe prince, or government, will likewiſe excite imitations; and if the ſpark of liberty ſhould catch the general mind, at a cultivated period, it may ſpread like fire, and through wiſdom and moderation, produce infinite good. In Europe, one or a few nations cannot probably

long

long enjoy a free government without its being communicated to the reſt; perhaps it can only be ſecured by becoming general. It is certainly of importance to know on what the ſpirit of induſtry, of improvement, and duration, depends. If there be a principle of univerſal efficacy throughout the moral as well as phyſical world, it may be that of mutual control. It ſeems eſſential to the exiſtence and duration of all political ſyſtems, and it would not be difficult to ſhew how all nature is ſupported by it.

Freedom and ſecurity being in ſome degree incompatible, as a part muſt be given up in order to ſecure the remainder, the ſecret ſeems to conſiſt in knowing what, and how much that part ſhould be. Hitherto we have probably been ſomewhat miſtaken in both. Till the great art of government becomes ſimplified and arranged out of chaos and myſtery, it will continue, like ſome other arts, to be adminiſtered often by ignorant and deſigning empirics. We have certainly done more than all the other nations towards the diſcovering and laying open the *arcana* of this great art; and it is

rather

rather ſurpriſing that other legiſlators have not been more ſolicitous to make uſe of our practical diſcoveries. The wiſdom and œconomy of a political principle, like thoſe of nature, muſt be eſtimated on the number and merits of the different purpoſes it is calculated to anſwer. Some of thoſe aſcribed to our great Alfred, by their duration, and being ſtill the beſt parts of our police, ſeem to have been dictated by the true legiſlative ſpirit. It may ſtill be a problem here in Europe, however the caſe may be determined in China, whether the government of good laws, or that of good men, be the beſt? Though both may be neceſſary, and each want the aſſiſtance of the other, and the latter may be impoſſible alone; yet if only one of them were to be had, the latter would probably be the beſt government of the two, if it could be prevented from declining into deſpotiſm. As laws advance and multiply, manners have often been obſerved to decline. The beſt ſyſtem would be that which produced the moſt wiſe and good men. There is a ſpirit compoſed of juſtice and humanity which comprehends

prehends almoſt all virtues, and which, if once generally attained, would ſupply the place of many laws; and men would then look for happineſs from their own virtues, talents, and exertions; and not, from fortune or dependence, nor from vice, intrigue, or artifice.

What a ſhame to the human race to ſee ſo ſmall a part of our globe yet peopled and cultivated! ſo few of the people properly civilized and improved, and their ſmall improvements confined to ſo few and far diſtant ſpots, ſeparated by immenſe deſerts, only parts of which are barely occupied by ſome wandering tribes of beings often ſcarcely human. Except China, ſome parts of India, and of Europe, the reſt is yet a barren waſte, rendered only the more gloomy by ſuch ſcattered inhabitants, or by containing here and there a parcel of oppreſſed people, the ſubjects of deſpotiſm. And even in the moſt improved parts of the world, perhaps, there is ſcarce a majority who have acquired wants enough to gain the proper habits of a continued induſtry; and above half

half the people would willingly remain deprived of moſt of what we ſhould conſider as the common neceſſaries of life, rather than work for them. But even when men are reduced by oppreſſion to the loweſt ſtate, to indolent, ſelfiſh, and malevolent beings, or to the character of ſlaves, they are rarely even then ſo bad as their ſuperiors affect to conſider them; and they might be more readily improved by gentle and confidential treatment, than by loads of penal laws, which only make them worſe; or by multiplying their chains as they become leſs able to break or to bear them. To change the habits of a whole people can only be done by working on the riſing generations; but that again is an art now little attempted or underſtood, and is generally left to chance, or to teachers whoſe views and intereſt may tend to keep them ignorant, or lead them aſtray. The vulgar, or common run of legiſlators, ſeem to think that the people can never be too much kept under. They muſt doubtleſs be regulated and controlled, but for their own benefit, that they may not by their exceſſes deſtroy their own weight

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and importance; an importance which we, in particular, muſt ſupport, with all its inconveniencies, if we mean to avoid the fate of other nations. But then their power and influence muſt act always by intermediate inſtruments, by their legal agents. I know not how our government could be ſo awkward and imprudent as to provoke their late attempts to act by themſelves, and in a political capacity, for which they are as totally unfit as they are qualified for certain civil and local functions.

Some of the nations of antiquity roſe to vigour and eminence by the direct road of virtue, by encouraging the nobleſt and moſt manly diſpoſitions. Perhaps there was no other way left for us ſelfiſh and degenerated moderns to emerge from Gothic barbariſm, but by the avaricious ſpirit of commerce and gain. By this we have riſen, and by its effects we muſt probably fall: for commerce and the arts have a tendency, without ſome wiſe regulations, gradually to corrupt, debilitate, and finally to enſlave mankind; and we may already too plainly perceive, in ſome of the foremoſt nations,

the footſteps of luxury and depravity, of tyranny and public abuſes, which may overtake and ſtop the progreſs of arts and induſtry.

Though no ſyſtem of government can be invented that will go on well, and as it were of itſelf, without a good head, or without ſome wiſdom in its leaders; yet we know that a conſtitution may exiſt in which the common defects of human nature may be provided for, and which a bad leader may not be able to deſtroy, and by which an indifferent one may maintain the ground already gained, till a better guide arrive to carry us on to farther improvements.

A general and perpetual congreſs, by repreſentatives from all the European ſtates, however impracticable at preſent, ſhould not however be loſt ſight of. You know it was attempted by the Greeks, and with ſome ſucceſs. If Europe ſhould continue to improve in knowledge and wiſdom, and acquire the habits of freedom, we may conceive ſuch a wiſe inſtitution to become practicable, and thence may proceed immenſe benefits to mankind, and the per-

fection of human government; that of each nation may be improved to the higheſt by the wiſdom of the whole; all may thence become properly connected in policy and free intercourſe of wants and knowledge, and one whole quarter of the world enjoy the beſt form of government that is poſſible among men. The idea might ſerve, at leaſt, as a point from which may be meaſured the degrees of our political progreſs and perfection. Indeed ſomething ſimilar already exiſts in the endeavours of all to preſerve a balance of power, which is of great effect and importance to the duration and ſtability of the different nations.

Confederacies have not yet been found to be ſo ſtrong, ſo unitable, nor ſo durable, as might be expected: but a more perfect union, on our plan, by repreſentatives with ſufficient powers, and yet under proper control, ſeems capable of more perfection and extenſion than is hitherto known or imagined. The chief defects in the northern ideas of government, in Germany, Holland, &c. ſeem to conſiſt in the want of the ſafe methods, and a liberal confidence, to dele-

gate repreſentatives with ſufficient powers to legiſlate for them, and reform their conſtitutions where neceſſary. They want to enjoy the benefits of a great ſovereignty, without granting the authority neceſſary to produce it. Until theſe little ſovereignties, or tyrannies, of which the great one conſiſts, give up to a proper legiſlature for the whole, a ſufficient power to make laws, and can relinquiſh the pleaſures of oppreſſing their ſubjects, they cannot expect to have a free, a happy, nor a powerful government.

As a great deal depends on the education and employment of the lower ranks of people, the preſent deficiencies in theſe may be ſufficient to ſtop the progreſs of mankind. Beſides the nature and proper diſtribution of employment, the quantity or proportion of it may be of great conſequence. Thoſe who are totally occupied in procuring ſubſiſtence can have no exertions to ſpare for the public, unleſs thoſe very exertions for exiſtence chance to have a tendency that way, which fortunately is often naturally the caſe in well-regulated ſocieties. But matters might ſurely be ſo ordered that all might

might have ſome time to ſpare for education, and all be induced to acquire the important habits of doing ſomething in a direct manner for the good of the whole.

But the remarkable concluſions to be drawn from theſe Letters ſeem to be, that the improvement of the world depends moſt on education, and principally on that of princes, of women, and of the lower claſſes; and then on legiſlation, the form and formation of which ſeem to be of the utmoſt importance. Propagating the knowledge of mathematics, and of muſic, ſeems likewiſe of more conſequence than is generally imagined.

Your doubts concerning the decline of Europe are very natural. I am glad you reflect on ſuch comprehenſive ſubjects. It may depend much on what we call accident. Though the torrent of manners is not to be ſtopped, yet we ſometimes ſee a ſingle event, or an individual, may give a turn to the tide. A ſingle battle, a Pitt, a Frederic, or a North American revolution, may give a conſiderable bias to opinions, to many nations, and to an age. Yes; the improve-

ments in war are as neceſſary, and conſtitute as eſſential a part of the whole advancement of the ſpecies, as thoſe of any other art; and are neceſſary to the preſervation of ſociety, and of all the other arts. As war improves, conqueſts become more difficult. The taking a town may coſt greater time and expence now than formerly a kingdom.

Your project and manner of travelling to improve the world as well as yourſelf, may do well enough as a half ſerious joke. There have been people romantic enough to accompany you; but I doubt your finding any ſuch at preſent, except perhaps ſome *odd man* in your own iſland. Wherever you go, I think you will find that the art which moſt impedes all the reſt, is that of government. Till the true legiſlative ſpirit revive, the world cannot advance; nor till the few nations that you ſee improve only by that ſpirit, can carry the reſt along with them. A government can improve perhaps only by frequent renovations, and reverting repeatedly to the firſt principles of natural liberty and juſtice; and you will find no

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ſuch proviſion yet any where, nearly ſufficient for the purpoſe. But there may be ſome hope for poſterity. This is a writing, an experimenting, and rather a ſenſible, though a trifling age, and may hoard up the means of future legiſlative improvements; and may furniſh the neceſſary information, and the true patriotic zeal, to ſome liberal and philoſophic prince, if ſuch can be produced in ſpite of the diſadvantages attending on courts, their birth and ſituation. But on the other hand, we have reaſon to dread a decline, and may doubt if letters and knowledge be ſo diffuſed and eſtabliſhed as never to be loſt, when we conſider on what precarious tenure they are held. A miſtaken monarch, or miniſter, the accidental conqueſt of a ſtupid general, or the deſtructive hand of deſpotiſm, may ſoon baniſh and ſhut them all out. Law, police, ſcience, arts, all that complex ſyſtem has vaniſhed from theſe rich Spaniſh plains, as from thoſe of Fez, Campania, Greece, where they were thought to be fixed for ever.

I leave you to determine theſe, and many other points, I hope, from farther experience and reflection. You may, in time, be able to judge whether the chances are in favour of good education and public virtue, or the contrary; how long the abuſes of tyranny may be reſtrained by mutual fear and ſhame, or by a livelier ſenſe of honour and juſtice, or by gentler manners, than formerly; whether the decline of morals may not accompany the progreſs of arts and knowledge, and the people be ingenious and induſtrious, yet weak and vicious, as we ſee in ſome manufacturing towns;—how long they may be protected by the arts which ſurvive and ſupply the decay of military virtue; and without the help of an enemy, how long they may be in conquering themſelves, in changing their nature and character, and thence the face of the country. We know from hiſtory the poſſibility of ſuch a progreſs. Or, if you ſhould think the world improving, you may be able to gueſs how long Europe may be in collecting and diffuſing knowledge and virtue enough to perfect

fect a ſyſtem of government for herſelf; if we may ſoon hope to ſee tyranny and ignorance quietly vanquiſhed, and nations change and improve their governments with eaſe and tranquillity, without civil wars and bloodſhed.

I do not diſapprove of your diſliking the florid ſtyle now in uſe, for which I think our language ſo little adapted. We have doubtleſs a great deal of good writing in this age; though much of it is too fine; and this meets with ſo great approbation, that I dread a decline, and that we may be encouraged to go on refining and ornamenting till we arrive at a depraved taſte in writing, as in the other arts, for they are all connected. I have told you how I think this progreſs may be retarded or directed, by the education and aſſiſtance of the other ſex. Read, by all means, the beſt writers on the ſubject of language, as Blair, though ſometimes trifling; Lords Kaimes and Monboddo, though often wild and fanciful, yet ingenious. But I want you to follow me in the ſtudy of matter more than of manner; to look beyond ſtyle, and as you write,

often

often ſeem to forget it. If the candid, who read and follow us, do not likewiſe forget it, we ſhall only have miſſed our aim; another may ſucceed: brevity and ſimplicity, and a certain contempt of finery and affectation, are not leſs the true genius and forte of our language. I know not that any of us have get produced, in Engliſh proſe, the true language of genius, without bordering on frenzy or madneſs. We have had writers equal and ſimilar to De Thous, Mezerays, Davilas, and even Crebillons; but have any of us written like Monteſquieu, Voltaire, Rouſſeau, or Beccaria? with all the brief and ſimple preciſion, yet temperate fire of genius and judgment? though our language is certainly capable of all theſe, at leaſt equally with theirs. I ſhould perhaps conſider Swift ſometimes, and a few of our mathematical or ſcientific writers, as having come the neareſt to what I mean.

A good writer in any original ſtyle has generally too much influence, and ſets the faſhion for too long a time, till his manner is worn to rags by his imitators. Moſt of our writers, for ſome time paſt, have tired

us with perpetual attempts at wit and banter, becauſe Swift and Addiſon ſucceeded in that ſtyle; and now, I ſuppoſe, many will for a long time go upon ſtilts, becauſe J—— and G—— have done ſo with ſome effect, though with ſo little grace and good taſte; and our writers, imitators of thoſe different maſters, may probably long be diviſible into two claſſes, *ſtalkers* and *triflers*, till œconomical Nature ſhall again produce ſome other original genius for us all to follow.

I fear you will find the commercial ideas of theſe two nations as yet too far behind the liberal principles of Adam Smith, to admit of any of the ſchemes of mutual advantage which you would propoſe. As they have hardly yet got beyond their own old engroſſing or hoarding ſyſtem, and only ſome are beginning to reaſon upon the *pedlar ſyſtem* of conſidering a favourable balance in money, and the manufacturing every thing they want for themſelves, as the only teſt of national proſperity, we cannot expect they will yet enter into any liberal or mutual beneficial plan of intercourſe and exchange;

change; especially while any plan that would enrich the people is not probably the object of those who govern them.

Had we more time and space, I should probably chuse to lay before you a still greater variety of general ideas and doubtful opinions to enter the world with, and to be determined by your future experience, to serve as motives to inquiry, and as food for reflection, in the course of your travels. If any of you should think I have been harping too much on the theme of government, you must all bear a share of the blame for your instigation. If we English do not make something of that theme, I fear none else will. The seeing other nations so ignorant of the subject induces us to dwell more upon it. On our return, I suppose we shall forget and neglect it as completely as any of you; for I think these subjects are wearing out of fashion in our country, while they are quite the *ton* everywhere else, especially since this American dispute began.

Three things I have yet to recommend to you young travellers, and your friends:

The

The firſt is, the common injunction of acquiring a general knowledge of your own country before you leave it, which I fear is not yet much better executed for being often repeated and generally known. Secondly, for you who have wives and families, or female relations, to take them with you, if poſſible; or to join ſome family party. The ladies and a domeſtic way of life will oblige you to become acquainted with many things and perſons, of conſequence to a knowledge of the world, and which you would overlook in running through a country *en garçon*. The third is, to fix your reſidence for a time in ſome part of a country before you begin to examine it, for many and obvious reaſons. By this mode of mixing reſidence with travel, you may acquire a knowledge of ſome countries, and make up, as it were, in depth what may be wanting in diſtance. Thoſe who travel for real improvement and information, ſhould go abroad twice or three times in their lives, *viz.* when very young, to form the organs of ſpeech to languages; and then between twenty and thirty years of

of age, to learn what is useful, or at least to observe how things may be seen and examined another time; for every country, in order to be well known, must be visited twice at least.

A LETTER FROM JERSEY.

To A. J.

SIR, Nov. 1787.

I AM glad to see you, and others, becoming more interested and active in promoting the prosperity of our distant coasts and islands, and that both the public and individual attention may in time reach the appendages and extremities of the kingdom; so that the loss of a distant empire may possibly be attended with the improvement of that at home, which is probably of far more importance to us. These islands in our channel, which we still possess, are certainly of great utility and credit to us as a commercial and maritime nation. The whole cluster of isles that form the British

empire,

empire, has of late begun to feel and to ſhew a progreſs and degree of power unknown before, and if they could all be properly united and governed, and public wiſdom accompany the progreſs of the other arts, they may in a century more ſerve the world as a pattern, and contribute more than all the other nations towards improving the reſt of mankind. But this empire cannot probably exert above half its beneficial influence on the world, nor can its internal improvements advance with above half the celerity of which they are capable, till all its parts are properly united in one well-balanced legiſlature. The quick and progreſſive riſe and improvement of the nation, ſince the union of the principal iſland, has been very remarkable; and let us hope the reſt, Ireland not excepted, will all in time be ſo united in a ſimilar, or perhaps a better and more intimate manner, as ſcience and liberal principles ſhall gradually prevail over prejudice and ignorance. Theſe ſmaller iſlands that lie round the greater ſhould certainly be ſo united and repreſented. The diſtant parts of the empire require perhaps

a greater proportion of the public attention and encouragement than the reſt, in order to bring them nearer to a par with the more central parts for their mutual benefit: and it affords pleaſure to ſee ſuch maxims begin to prevail, and hopes that even the Highlands of Scotland will not be much longer neglected. And let not the liberal minds give up in deſpair, though they ſhould be repeatedly diſappointed. The different attempts and diſappointments will not be entirely loſt. They call the public attention, and produce repeated diſcuſſions: men are thence better prepared to take advantage of accidents. Ignorance, public abuſes, and the remains of feudal tyranny, may thus in time be gradually overcome, and at length be baniſhed even from the extremities of all the Britiſh dominions.

The numerous beauties of this little iſland I ſhall not attempt to deſcribe. The rocky promontories, romantic excavations, and extenſive amphitheatrical ſandy bays of its coaſt, the internal little ſhady vales and ſtreams, are all remarkably beautiful. The whole is perhaps too much covered with

wood; the diviſions of the land too ſmall: the numerous fences planted with trees, together with the roads, occupy probably one ſixth of the iſland. The ſea ſeems gaining on the weſt end, near St. Owen's Bay, &c. The natural hiſtory and produce would require more attention than we can ſpare, and probably deſerve it. Theſe iſlands are obviouſly the tops of marine mountains, and ſimilar to thoſe of the Pyrenées, &c. conſiſting of a few different kinds of perhaps primitive rock, thrown up in confuſed heaps or ſhattered maſſes. Where any ſtrata are perceptible, they are nearly perpendicular to the horizon.

It is ſaid to contain about 58,000 acres. The face of the country interſected by hills, vales, and deep ravines, and very defenſible. The climate temperate, the ſpring earlier by a fortnight than in England. Paſture chiefly attended to. Apple-trees too many, and the cyder not ſo good as it might be with more care and ſkill. Fifteen hundred heifers and cows bred and ſent to England annually.

The people about 20,000, ſimple in their manners, civil to ſtrangers, their minds not

cultivated, for want of proper ſchools, extremely loyal, fond of the Engliſh government, and deteſting the French; we know not how long this may laſt. Occupation of the men, huſbandry and navigation: of the women, huſbandry, and knitting woollen ſtockings, which gives bread to moſt of the lower claſs. They ſay in 1785, that 3595 tods of wool were made into ſtockings; 246,800 pair have been ſent annually for ſome years to Southampton only. Their navigation and trade moſtly to the Newfoundland fiſhery, forty-five or fifty veſſels, with 2000 ſeamen, returning in winter to their huſbandry. The profits of their trade moſtly placed in the Engliſh funds; their conſumption of our manufactures, their ſituation, &c. under the advantages to Britain very conſiderable, and which might be much increaſed both in peace and war.

In 1779, Jerſey and Guernſey had at ſea ſeventy-one armed veſſels, carrying 696 guns, and 3450 men. The French, if they poſſeſſed this iſland, would ſoon draw greater advantages from it—perhaps equal to thoſe expected from Cherbourg, and at much

much leſs expence. Their fidelity, their happineſs, ſhould and might eaſily be ſecured, and their government be turned into a model for the world. Have any pains been taken to examine how this may be done? or are we becoming gradually more unfit to govern foreign poſſeſſions, till we are liberal enough to unite them into our legiſlature? Above 100 years ago, theſe people complained they had no criminal law. In the courſe of fifty years the people have twice riſen againſt their magiſtrates, which they never do without reaſon; yet they ſay nothing effectual has been done, even to prevent the like in future. We have not attempted to reform their laws, their abſurd and antiquated French cuſtoms, nor to check the natural ariſtocratic abuſes of power; nor have we defined the nature of their connection and dependence on us.

Of their preſent ſtate of ſociety and government, I ſhall only give you a few of my uſual looſe remarks. Theſe iſlands have been held as a remnant of Normandy, by what accidental care and good fortune it is needleſs here to trace. Their form of go-

vernment is an old feudal ariſtocracy, eſtabliſhed by king John, with the legiſlative, the judicial, and, for a time, the executive powers, in the ſame body of people, as was the mode in thoſe times of war and ignorance. They have been conſidered as belonging not to our legiſlature, but to the crown, and have generally been under the adminiſtration or ſuperintendence of the privy council, which is not I believe allowed to be very well conſtituted even for a court of law; how well calculated to be a legiſlative body I will not pretend to determine. Can that body be ſuppoſed qualified or conſtituted to beſtow the neceſſary time and pains, or to poſſeſs the local knowledge neceſſary to be both the ſupreme legiſlature and judge of a people ſo ſituated and circumſtanced; or will it not rather be generally diſpoſed to apply palliatives, and patch up defects, and put off the conſideration of the moſt important points? Their various petitions for theſe ten years paſt, have obtained no effectual remedy. Their preſent degree of tranquillity, though far from complete, is probably owing to the popular op-

poſition having gained a majority in the legiſlature. The moſt democratic government muſt perhaps become ariſtocratic in ſome degree; the degree and form of which is of great importance. When it can be properly divided into an upper and lower part, ſeparate, independent, and nearly balanced, and under the control properly limited of one head, the ſyſtem may become nearly complete: but here, the two latter are defective. The upper and lower parts, the Peers and Commons, ſit together, and the ariſtocratic part commonly governs, as uſual in this form: the yet ill-defined powers of the head are divided between a governor and a baily, who generally act by deputies. This *ſimulacre* of a conſtitution deceives at firſt view with ſome appearance of control and balance, of forms, elections, judges; but theſe are chiefly fallacies, and the whole has been too often found to be little better than a tyrannical ariſtocracy. The ſtates or legiſlature conſiſts of twelve jurats, elected by the whole iſland for life,—of the twelve rectors of the twelve pariſhes, and of twelve members called conſtables, one

elected by each parish for three years, with the lieutenant-baily who holds the states. The governor represents the king, has a negative on their resolutions, and his consent is necessary to the convening the states. But a negative has likewise been lately given to the lieutenant-baily; a material alteration in their constitution, which tends to impede all redress, relief, or improvement. The clergy from their education are probably the best informed part of this legislature, and can have but few interested views. Where there are no places or preferment for them, and their livings being very small, it seems their interest to be popular among their parishioners; they are generally now on the side of the people, and seem to be proportionally disliked by the seigneurs. Their bishop, *viz.* of Winchester, surely ought to visit them sometimes, and they should have more students at our universities, where there is only a scanty provision of three fellowships, and twelve poor scholarships, for the two islands. The judicial power, or royal court, is only a certain number of the jurats, who, in this capacity,

cannot be expected always to forget their political or party ſpirit; and accordingly they have often uſed their judicial power to promote their political views and influence, and cauſes are frequently decided in favour of their own party. As legiſlators, or as judges, they are placed in a cruel and difficult ſituation, and if they have been ſometimes tyrannical and unjuſt, their political conſtitution is perhaps more in fault than they.

In order to procure juſtice and freedom, the efficient government, of whatever form, ſhould be under ſome control, or it will degenerate into tyranny:—ſuch is man. This ariſtocracy has been formerly long in the habits of governing without any ſufficient reſtraint; and though a ſpirit of liberty and oppoſition has at length found its way hither, and the jurats have loſt their great influence in the ſtates, yet they may again recover it, and reſume their wonted deſpotic ſway, if the privy council ſhould be too partial to the ariſtocratic part. Their preſent ſituation, full of perpetual ſtruggles between the governing and popular

pular parties, creates violent heats and animosities, and threatens dangerous confusion, as usual in small places, especially if no umpire of sufficient authority and influence is present to decide the contest, and with wisdom enough to preserve the balance. The restoring and supporting their ancient tyranny can hardly now be intended, as some of them suspect, being a measure so highly unworthy an English government, and could only be effected by such violent means as would in these days disgrace any nation. The only remedy is to mend their constitution, and give them some English laws, which is now much desired by many. Juries, in the way which they themselves propose, and which were anciently in use here as in Normandy*, would probably answer well enough for them, *viz.* in cases where desired by the parties. It may be alleged, that in such small places their decisions would still be only the voice of party; but these, by being generally the opinion of a majority, would probably be nearly and often right, and would be less

* See the *Grand Coutumier* of Normandy.

partial

partial than the judgment of arbitrary and intereſted magiſtrates. The judicial power ſhould certainly be ſeparated from the legiſlative. The jurats cannot be impartial judges, they cannot both make and apply the laws.

Such a baſeleſs fabric as this old French ariſtocracy is not now long to be ſupported, and was only practicable in the hands of wiſdom or artifice, and experience; but muſt crumble to pieces if it ſhould repeatedly fall under the guidance of folly, vanity, paſſion, or inexperience, and ſtill more if under all theſe together: which you will perceive to be very poſſible, when you trace the manner in which the ruling powers are appointed.

It might be owing to the tyranny, inſufficiency, or non-reſidence of former governors, that their power has been divided: the civil part has been given to a baily who holds the ſtates, &c. by deputy; and little elſe beſides the military part, remains to the governor. Unleſs theſe two chance to be very wiſe and temperate men, they muſt be at perpetual war. In the body politic, there

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is no ſupplying the want or deficiency of a head: every ſubſtitute or contrivance for that purpoſe can form only a monſter which cannot live long. It is better there be always a neceſſity for a good head, to oblige ſovereigns to look out for proper governors, and not indulge them in thinking their fools or favourites ſufficient. Beſides, we ſhould attend to the change of times and manners, for many obvious reaſons. Even proper military lieutenant-governors may now perhaps be more eaſily found than lieutenant-bailies above mediocrity, or ſufficiently qualified for the head of ſuch a ſtate. There is ſometimes a period in ſociety, when the military men, being brought up in the principles of honour and œconomy, are the moſt to be truſted. The army may now produce as many men of ſufficient probity, and general knowledge, as any other line of life. It is not to be eaſily underſtood why we have been ſo backward in giving theſe people the ſame kind of government with our other iſlands, by a governor, ſenate, and aſſembly.

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In every country and form of rule, there ought perhaps to be complaints and abuſes enough to feed and maintain an oppoſition as a watch and control upon power; and when oppoſition is increaſed to a majority, by the increaſe of abuſes, they are thus often redreſſed. This oppoſition having of late grown up to a majority, under every diſadvantage, marks that it is high time to change and improve their conſtitution. Though theſe poor people may not have ſo much to complain of as they imagine or as might be expected under ſo imperfect a government; though they may naturally magnify their own evils and ſufferiances; yet they ought ſurely to have at leaſt ſome of them redreſſed. They might ſucceed better, perhaps in every ſenſe, with more patience and moderation; but theſe qualities may be more difficult to acquire in proportion to the ſmallneſs of the ſociety, and defective form of its conſtitution. This is not a government of laws, but of perſons, which uſually degenerates into tyranny. They can hardly indeed be ſaid to have any laws,

laws, except a few orders of council, and ſome vague and uncertain old cuſtoms, which are naturally neglected and forgotten by an arbitrary government. But ſince Colonel Campbell, their lieutenant-governor in 1761, firſt encouraged an oppoſition to the reigning magiſtrates, their minds and views have been gradually opening, and they have caught a little of that ſpirit of freedom and diſcuſſion which ſurrounds them in Europe; and it ſeems rather ſurpriſing, that our government has not yet encouraged their efforts, nor ſeconded that gentleman's benevolent endeavours, and has been ſo remiſs in granting them more of our laws and conſtitution. However, their legiſlative ideas ſeem to be advancing by their contentions, more than for centuries before. The principles and improvements of the age muſt probably, in time, reach theſe iſlands.

Though they may yet be conſidered as children in politics, and unfit to govern themſelves; though they may not all ſufficiently conſider the long gradation neceſſary to perfection in domeſtic policy,

nor

nor the difficulties, or rather impoſſibility of adopting, at once, all the laws and conſtitution of England, which have required the progreſſion of ages to attain the preſent degree of excellence, and which their ſtate is not yet ripe for; this perhaps ought to coſt them much time and pains, and muſt prove the reſult of gradual experience. However, ſome of them are ſenſible of this, and wiſh it to be gradual. You might begin either by granting them the juries they deſire, or by improving their conſtitution only by a ſmall alteration in its form; by ſeparating the ſtates into two houſes, with a governor only: the repreſentatives of the people might be increaſed, and the jurats be choſen for ſix years, as a ſenate; the other neceſſary changes would gradually follow of courſe. To do this in the wiſeſt and moſt temperate manner, ſend them proper commiſſioners firſt to examine and report: and ſuch ſhould be ſent perhaps every two or three years to ſee juſtice done,—a biennial, or triennial circuit. The local judges or juſtices might be elected or ſelected from a number preſented by the pariſhes, from

whom

whom the governor might chuſe; or *vice verſa*:—but theſe muſt not be of the ſtates.

Many think the form of government immaterial, if the people are contented. You know I do not think ſo; but even that excuſe for ſtanding ſtill, or for checking the natural human progreſs, will probably ſoon be removed; for much of the world ſeem now to be changing their ideas very faſt on theſe ſubjects. In this progreſs, the wiſeſt rulers will give way to ſome of the inevitable innovations, and will attempt only to limit the degree, and reſtrain the impetuoſity, but not forcibly oppoſe the carrying of ſome ſpeculations into practice. If any of theſe rulers are really great, they will ſtep forward and become the leaders of temperate reformation; they will eſtabliſh and repair, but not deſtroy ſyſtems, and will become great legiſlators, and the re-founders of laſting nations. The gradual improvement of man, of the ſociety or the ſpecies, is an intereſting progreſs, in which the knowledge of his own errors is the firſt ſtep; and to which the theories,

and

and even hints of ſpeculation, and the facts of experience, are all equally neceſſary and conducive. In this progreſs, political and legiſlative knowledge ſeems to be the moſt neceſſary, and hitherto the moſt deficient. But all the aſſiſtance of ſuch knowledge cannot perhaps be expected till education is better underſtood, nor till theory is more generally joined with practice, ſtudy with experience and travel. I could ſometimes wiſh no man to be admitted as a magiſtrate, more than a paſtor, who had not paſſed ſome certain degree or examination at an univerſity, if we did not ſee that numbers may take that road and bring away very little uſeful ſcience: and yet ſome of theſe may become even miniſters of ſtate long before they know on what the proſperity of a nation depends. Such knowledge is not to be found ready for uſe in books and college lectures, nor in the huge volumes of the law, however neceſſary theſe may be, as a foundation for experience to build upon. Hence our political and commercial principles have been ſo often deficient. It may require yet much more time, and

a more

a more general information; to baniſh all the remains of our monopolizing corporation ideas of commerce and balance of trade, founded on opinions and ſentiments unworthy a Jew pedlar, *viz.* on a mean jealouſy of all the world, and wiſhing no nation to have a profit or favourable balance but ourſelves; and it was ſhameful to ſee miniſters, not very long ago, reaſoning from the ideas of the meaneſt monopoliſt, deſirous that other nations ſhould take our manufactures, and make nothing for themſelves that ſhould enable them to pay us: whereas it might eaſily be ſhewn that the higheſt cultivation and induſtry of the world would proportionally increaſe the commerce of all nations. From the ſame kind of narrow principles have proceeded much of our politics of late, endeavouring to engroſs the trade and dependence of colonies and diſtant countries, to our mutual diſadvantage. It is to be feared there are ſtill ſome who think we were wrong in permitting to our colonies ſuch good forms of government by which they proſpered ſo faſt, and became more independent on our caprices; but chiefly by our own folly and

tyranny they were ſeparated from us before their time. Thoſe people would have had us imitate Spain, and ſecure the dependence of our colonies by their poverty and depopulation. Will it be believed by poſterity, that ſuch ſentiments prevailed in the firſt nation of the world during the eighteenth century? Such maxims and events are certainly of hiſtorical importance, and ſhould be held up to poſterity in their proper colours. But let us hope our public councils will now improve, as general knowledge and more liberal legiſlative principles gradually prevail in the world, and that the times are nearly paſt which produced ſtamp acts, Quebec bills, and ſuch proceedings as loſt us an empire. Let us give way to, or rather take the lead in, the improvements of the age. Myſtery and oppreſſion cannot long ſubſiſt, nor ſucceed as hitherto, in theſe inveſtigating and enlightened times, and muſt probably be gradually relinquiſhed, and baniſhed from the art of governing mankind. How much better to lead than be driven, and to beſtow in time with a good grace, what muſt at length be, as it were, extorted by the general voice? Even when

a Conway ſhall be no more, though virtue and ſcience and taſte ſhall then each drop a tear, other friends to liberty and juſtice will ariſe to ſupport and extend their reviving principles, and who will lead your long-neglected iſlanders into the general legiſlature, or to all the benefits of the Britiſh laws and government. There is a kind of liberality, which is the higheſt wiſdom in politics, and though not yet much known, may in time prevail. Let us be timely wiſe, and grant proſperity to the remoteſt parts of the empire, at preſent diſintereſtedly, for their benefit, but which will in time reſult to the good of the whole. The political heart, that ſhall freely circulate blood and life to the extremities, will have it returned with double vigour and advantage. Grant them, by degrees, all the freedom, immunities, and good government they deſire; you will reap the profit in the courſe of time, and of their natural progreſs, without any of the mercantile inſidious arts or monopolizing ſtipulations.

I think I find here moſt of my old political principles confirmed by experience, and on a ſcale neither too ſmall for fair experiment, nor too large for the eye to take in by

comparative views, nor too full of uncertainty from the complication of different causes. In moſt old eſtabliſhments, in all unfair modes of government, but eſpecially in ariſtocracies, there is a natural tendency to keep things as they are, and hence to exclude almoſt all improvements by which the rulers fear they may chance to loſe ſome power or influence. They are naturally jealous of the merchant, the manufacturer, the rich *bourgeois* or *parvenus*, and of every innovator or improver. Here, they are accordingly jealous even of the commerce that would finally enrich themſelves, and of the very learning and the ſchools that would enlighten and improve all. This is the ſmall working model of a great nation. We ſee human nature at work as we do bees through the glaſs hive. There doubtleſs muſt always be a difference of rank among men in ſociety; but on the proper regulation and limitation of that difference will depend much of their progreſs and political happineſs. Whether the people are moſt happy in ſlavery or in freedom, was once diſputed in the countries that are now the freeſt and moſt civilized, and is diſputed

ſtill in Ruſſia, Poland, the Weſt-Indies, &c. That they are more active and induſtrious with liberty and ſecurity, can now hardly be doubted. In every ſociety there is a natural tendency and progreſſion towards an injurious difference, an increaſing inequality in rank and riches. The beſt governments will be known by their contriving juſt and gentle limits and obſtructions to this evil, and that ſhall raiſe and ſupport the poor and helpleſs againſt the rich and powerful, between whom there is always a ſecret, but very unequal war and enmity: they will not throw weights into the ariſtocratic ſcale, which is always too heavy: rank and riches will generally have too much influence among men; theſe require no help from government, and will be checked by wiſdom to make room for merit. We may doubt if there be any government yet eſtabliſhed, that is completely adequate to this taſk, but we may preſume that our own comes the neareſt to it, and may hope it will come nearer ſtill. But I am perhaps too eaſily led into general reflections, in ſearch of practical truths, and principles of importance.

You know I conſider the art or ſcience of legiſlation as yet in its infancy.

The things that are wanting to make theſe poor iſlanders as happy as nature allows, may be few though eſſential. A mediocrity, rather bordering on poverty, with a purity and ſimplicity of manners, ſeem to prevail here. A diviſion of property, uncommonly minute, provides a ſort of independent ſubſiſtence for a greater number than is almoſt anywhere to be found on an equal ſpace of territory. The ancient ſlaviſh conditions of ſome of their tenures ſhould be aboliſhed, as the labour due to the *ſeigneurs*, and the corn rents, &c. Theſe few ſmall alterations, with the trials by jury, ſome Engliſh laws, and perhaps members of parliament, may be another eaſy and probably the beſt method of effectually attaching them to our country and government, and would gradually bring the other requiſites towards making them more induſtrious, populous, and more important iſlands to England. Their poor and parſimonious appearance, and modes of living, of dreſs, of farming, their utenſils, manners, &c. ſeem all as yet a little too much in the

French

French ſtyle. They ought ſurely, by this time, to have been more like Engliſh people. Our government has certainly been the moſt to blame in this. I doubt we are conſtitutionally inadequate or unfit for the management of foreign poſſeſſions, till they are incorporated in our legiſlature, and thence all become gradually ſubject to the ſame laws. A large proportion of the men here go to ſea, while their ſmall poſſeſſions are but indifferently cultivated. Under better government, laws, and tenures, this uncommon junction of the trades of ſailor and farmer might be ſeparated, and both ſucceed better; with many other beneficial effects, as more activity, education, &c.

This iſland may be conſidered as a model in ſome eſſentials, and worthy the imitation of greater ſtates; as in the military arrangements, and ſyſtem of defence, which have been ſo highly improved, and almoſt formed *de novo*, by the preſent governor, General Conway, whom theſe people ſtyle their father and defender. The whole of the inhabitants, of all ranks, have been formed into an excellent militia, in which there

are many points that ſhew the very rare degree of military ſcience of the inſtituton, as well as his towers, and the whole ſyſtematic defence of the coaſt. I think the uniform he has given them here, the jacket and long trowſers, is the beſt military dreſs I have yet ſeen, and anſwers all the purpoſes we want. Theſe, with the artillery part of each corps, and ſeveral other regulations, are highly worthy of imitation. To complete the ſyſtem, a place of ſtrength is wanting; one that ſhould ſtand a ſiege of a certain time, and that could be readily ſupplied and relieved by ſea, which is a chief object in every fortification for us, and indeed the only circumſtance that can now render a place impregnable, ſuch as Tyre, Bergenopzoom, Gibraltar, might be made. A harbour, protected by the fort, might likewiſe be formed, for frigates at leaſt, as theſe might be of ſignal ſervice ſo ſtationed, particularly at the beginning of a war. The importance of theſe iſlands to England, as advanced poſts, &c. need not, I hope, be here demonſtrated to you. In the civil wars, you know they remained firmly loyal,

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and by their annoyance of the Parliament's forces by ſea, ſhewed what miſchief they might do us in the hands of an enemy. Charles II. knew their importance, and always obſtinately refuſed, when in the greateſt want of aſſiſtance, to ſell them to France for that purpoſe.

It appears that the Druids reſorted much to theſe iſlands as well as to Angleſea. The ruins of above fifty of their monuments or temples have been diſcovered here; one lately, very complete, which is going to be ſent to their Governor's at Park Place. The Druids were right. Theſe ſecluded iſles were then well ſuited for ſtudy and meditation, and probably for their myſterious worſhip, and for ſafety. This beautiful iſland, I think, even now well adapted for ſtudy, and for education, and poſſeſſes many advantages for a good ſchool, being the only place we know where French and Engliſh are ſpoken equally well by all ranks above the common and country people. The courts of juſtice, and law pleadings in French; the preaching in both languages, alternately: a pleaſant retired and healthy country; innocence

nocence and ſimplicity of manners; great œconomy, with a mediocrity of wealth and condition; the inhabitants all proteſtants; little œconomical tours to France with the ſcholars might be eaſily made. I know of no place abroad poſſeſſing ſo many advantages for an early education *.

I know of no good account publiſhed of theſe iſlands. That of Jerſey, by the Rev. Mr. Falle, is juſtly reckoned the beſt. Dr. Shebbeare has written a violent ſcurrilous account of invective upon their late tranſactions. He had good materials, the MS. of the late Mr. Le Geyt, a reſpectable character, and well informed. The Doctor could write, and ſeems to have wanted little more than a greater ſhare of temper and moderation to have made a very good book of it; but he has made a very bad one.

* Here is Dr. Dupré, bred at Oxford, miniſter of the capital pariſh, a character every way qualified and ready for the office of chief maſter. Others might be found here, and ſome be brought from England and France. Mr. Dupré would now, by himſelf, take a dozen boys, and could prepare them for the univerſity.

Now

Now that rational ideas of government, and philoſophers, begin to be known, and to have ſome influence among men, we cannot expect that dependent ſtates will long put up with much neglect or ill uſage. This ſtate of things may produce great effects in future, and in the mean time oblige careleſs legiſlators and miniſters to beſtow a little more attention to the giving proper laws and conſtitutions to their diſtant as well as domeſtic ſubjects.—I can yet ſee no effectual way without admitting all into one legiſlature, and improving the repreſentation.

We now begin to ſee that Plato and Socrates were probably right, and that none but the true philoſophers can really improve and govern the world; the reſt of mankind are governed by it. —Since we have lately ſeen true philoſophy ſo often prevail, in America and in France, even in numerous aſſemblies, it ſeems to inſpire half mankind with a new ſpirit, with freſh hope and energy, with a freedom of inveſtigation which muſt in time be productive of much good; rulers who have any wiſdom will now ſhew it in their manner of treating this new ſpirit: to oppoſe it in front, is already found to be folly.

We ſee that every ſyſtem of government hitherto tried, muſt frequently be wound up and repaired, or it will gradually decline, even to ruin. The inequalities which the natural efforts

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of men produce in ſociety muſt, after a certain progreſs, be brought back towards the general intereſt. Theſe reſolutions muſt probably happen oftener, as men advance in knowledge: the oftener the better; it is only delaying the remedy that makes it ſevere. When civilized and enlightened, the many will not bear with ſo much ill uſage from the few, as when under the habits of oppreſſion and ignorance. It is only wiſe inſtitutions that can do every thing; and that which haſtens civilization muſt be the beſt. Though perfect equality is impoſſible among men, yet ſome wiſe limit to inequalities ſeems yet wanting in the art of government, to obviate the neceſſity of theſe too frequent repairs and revolutions. Even here, this tendency towards extreme inequalities,—the ariſtocratic or tory ſpirit, ſeems to be gradually gaining ground ſince the laſt revolution, and to mark out a period which began on whig principles, and which muſt probably end in toryiſm.

This progreſs may be farther traced both in practice and ſpeculation.

Perhaps great riches and rank muſt always ſpoil their poſſeſſors, in ſome degree. When they become too proud, indolent, inſolent, &c. their inferiors will ſoon get before them in the moſt eſſential qualities; and then ſuperior ſcience, wiſdom, and virtue, will not long remain ſubmiſſive to ignorance, folly, and vice. It is then only by being really reſpectable, that the great can contrive to be reſpected; and theſe are the terms on which they muſt ſubmit to live

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and enjoy their ſuperiority, and are probably the moſt advantageous for themſelves and for ſociety.

When the mode and the means ſhall be found of bringing men, the choice of the nation, into its councils, the higher ranks may here alſo be aſtoniſhed to find themſelves far outnumbered and outdone in knowledge, wiſdom, and virtue. But let them not even then be alarmed. The triumph of the beſt and completeſt repreſentation would not now hurt them,—even a Cromwell could not. A large majority are too much attached to the excellent and well-tried form of their conſtitution, ever to aboliſh or materially reduce any of its members, as ſome men too ſagaciouſly imagine; this is the left handed wiſdom of timidity.—

The few who riſe too high in ſociety are apt to forget the terms on which they hold their ſuperiority, viz. only ſo long as they can make the reſt agree to it. Thoſe who have poſſeſſions aim at ſtability, and thoſe who have none muſt wiſh for revolutions: habitual moderation and wiſdom are neceſſary to temper this natural warfare; but human avidity is ever attempting degrees of ſecurity which are impoſſible in ſociety. All the laws and entails that can be invented will not change the nature of men and things. It is only as good adminiſtrators for the reſt, that the great proprietors can ſecure the perpetuity of their poſſeſſions: and fortunately as ſuch, the ſecurity of their rank and property ſeems as yet to be greater in this country than in moſt others.

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The triumph of any party or principles, after a long and warm conteſt, generally carries them too far. The entire prevalence, and the domineering ſpirit, of tory and high-church principles, may in time furniſh provocation ſufficient to create again ſome general aſſociations, and other revolutions here, as well as in France, and as might have been the caſe in 1780, had not the ignorant operations of a mad L—d brought all aſſociations into diſgrace for a time.

By this tory ſpirit, the nation or rather its government has loſt America, and perhaps Ireland too, and may yet loſe more, unleſs the folly of miniſters ſhould again provoke attempts to a reformation of the ſyſtem; for men will not move till forced to it, nor be at the pains to aſſociate, without repeated and powerful provocations; though lighter motives than heretofore may ſoon be ſufficient to unite them in the common intereſt. New revolutions, and the triumph of party, or the influence of all-debaſing riches, may alſo tempt an exalting majority to go too far, and again produce a decline in the uſual way; till ſome mode of periodical repair, or ſome reſtraining principle, can be applied to ſecure the duration or natural progreſſion of the art of government, ſo that it may keep pace with other arts.

To the liberal character of William III. this nation is indebted for its preſent conſtitution. Had he luckily brought them likewiſe ſome of his Dutch laws for dividing inheritances, it might have prolonged the period or obviated

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the neceſſity of ſome other revolution. Now that nations ſeem to be getting into the way of learning uſeful knowledge from each other, may not we hope they will in time borrow wiſe laws and inſtitutions, wherever theſe can be found?

The author publiſhed theſe letters only for the few thinkers, and he rejoices to find there are yet many among us, and to find the age ſo well inclined to go along with him. If he can increaſe the number of thinkers, or add to their ſtock of uſeful ideas, he will think his labour well beſtowed. He wiſhes he could ſufficiently impreſs many with the importance of ſome of theſe truths,—as with that of the wiſdom of *inſtitution*, which appears to be omnipotent. Wiſe inſtitutions ſeem to produce exertions, wiſdom, manners, virtue, as naturally as a good cultivation produces a good crop. If thoſe of *education* and *legiſlation* could be improved, or led into the way of their natural progreſs, the reſt would come of courſe.

Waſhington is perhaps the firſt legiſlator who has dared to ſay in earneſt, 'Let us enlighten the people.' Moſt governments have ſtrove to keep them in ignorance, or within ſuch limited paths of knowledge as were equivalent to ignorance. Let us hope this new ſpirit of legiſlation and education will ſpread in the world, and produce its natural effects. The writer preſumes that his obſervations were juſt, in ſuppoſing the art of government yet in its infancy, but that the revival of the legiſlative age was not far diſtant.—We are perhaps right in waiting the reſult of the opera-

operations of freedom among our neighbours, before we attempt to follow them: but it would be diſgraceful for this nation to be the laſt to perceive, and the warmeſt to oppoſe the principles,—the wiſdom of their laudable endeavours. There is a juſt medium to be obſerved in this as in every thing elſe,—between the levity of flying to violent remedies before the diſeaſe be ſufficiently ripe, and the folly of waiting to ſee if we die or no, before we ſend for a phyſician.

The ſtyle and matter of theſe letters might perhaps have been ſomewhat better arranged; but the author apprehends that the information they contain, will be found to be the reſult of much obſervation and reflection. To the modern fruitleſs taſte for minute enquiries, they may not appear ſufficiently extenſive and numerous; but this is a taſte he does not profeſs or wiſh to ſatisfy; and ſtill fancies he has ſaid almoſt enough—to thoſe who can read. The local knowledge of the countries he conſidered as already before the public, by different authors, from whom he could not think it right, nor ſubmit to copy. The encouragement which he has received, may perhaps induce an attempt at another volume, in which he may give an account of Spaniſh writers, &c. who are now but little known, and ſome obſervations on the hiſtory of that country.



THE END.